

三嶋くろね

暁
なつめ

illustration

この素晴らしい 素世界に 祝福を!

鈍ら
四重奏
ナマクラ
カルテット

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Prologue

It warmed my heart looking at the gentle flames in the fireplace.

I watched the fire while slouching onto a couch and wearing a comfy cotton robe.

Someone offered a teacup to me gracefully.

“The red tea of the highest grade is ready, Kazuma-san.”

Aqua who passed the red tea to me said as she sat beside me.

I took a sip...

“... This is plain water.”

“Ara ara, look how clumsy I am. My apologies, Kazuma-san.”

“Don’t worry, you can just make another pot of tea. Thank you Aqua-san. I will drink this anyway.”

Now that I think of it, Aqua could purify any liquid she touched.

She must have turned it into plain water accidentally while brewing the tea.

With my current stable state of mind, I won’t get angry over this trivial matter.

Sipping the warm water, a warmth spread through my body.

Harmony.

So people can be so harmonious if they become rich.

I smiled as I looked at Aqua who was reading a book titled ‘Language used by high class society even a goblin can learn’.

And bring the tea Aqua brewed again to my lips.

-- It is still plain water, but my current self won’t feel angry over trivial things like this.



Bidding Farewell to this Annoying World!

Part 1

Spring.

It was the season where snow melts and the time for adventurers who shut themselves indoors to venture out once again.

The monsters became active in their breeding season, that's how Spring was.

Also —

“Don't wanna— ! No! It's cold outside! Nah, what is wrong with you? Are you two idiots? There are still snow everywhere, why the rush to go out? Are you still kids? Are you on the same level of children who want to play outside? If you really want to, then go by yourself!”

Spring was also known as the time people turn hot headed.

It might be Spring now, but there are still snow outside the town.

Aqua clinged to the couch in front of the fireplace as Darkness and Megumin tried with all their might to pull her away.

In reply to the two who wanted to do quests because of the surge in the number of monsters, Aqua was throwing a tantrum saying “It's still cold” and “Don't wanna”.

“Who is a kid, Aqua, you are acting just like one! Hurry, we are going! You lazed around enough in the winter, it is about time to start working! Or else...!”

“Frogs and other monsters are turning active outside the town, I heard the farmers are facing losses. Adventurers have the obligation to protect the residents! Hey, hey Aqua! Release your hand now! If not...!”

Megumin and Darkness glanced in my direction as they said that.

“You will become like that!” x2

Their voices synchronized.

Aqua timidly followed their gaze and looked at me.

“I don't want to be like that no matter what... But before convincing me, take care of that bum!”

Aqua said something rude with a complicated expression.

“Hey you girls, even the gentle me will lash out if you do that. What are you all talking about, calling me a bum is rude okay?”

“If you have something to say then come out of there first.”

Aqua who was still grabbing the couch replied to my protest.

The weather was bone chilling today. I wasn't in the mood to answer such foolish opinions and pulled my head in.

Pulled back into the ultimate weapon of Japan, the Kotatsu.¹

— After defeating the demon army boss Vanir, we returned to town.

And found that devil still very much alive and working in Wiz's shop.

He then made an ominous prophecy regarding Darkness and proposed a business opportunity.

The business proposition was — Merchandizing the goods of my original world.

I just need to develop the merchandize, the manufacturing and sale will be done by Vanir.

This was what I was intending to do anyway. And so I carried out Vanir's request and develop merchandize in my spare time during winter —

“... Kazuma. It is about time to come out of there alright? Or else it would be a bad influence on Aqua. I understand that Kazuma is really capable and the warming items in your country is really outstanding. But the snow is already melting outside. It is time get active again okay?”

Megumin bend her back and said with a gentle smile to me who had morphed into a Kotatsu snail, as if she was soothing a stubborn child.

“That's right Kazuma. That Kotatsu thing was really great during the winter. However, it is time to let it go. Come, help me like you did in the dungeon back then. Hurry, together...”

Darkness was also smiling bending forth with her hand reaching out to take off the blanket...

I cast a spell at Darkness' defenceless neck.

“Freeze!”

“Ahhh —!?”

Darkness whose neck and back was suddenly froze screamed.

It was probably doubly effective in this season, it made Darkness cup her neck and shiver as she squatted down on the carpet.

“This, this man retaliated! Don't push your luck Kazuma! You are lazing around too much even if the debts had been cleared! Get up now! Ah, what do you want to do with that hand, don't resist and obediently aahhhhh —!”

I grabbed the hand of Megumin as she tried to pull me out and activated 'Drain Touch'.

Megumin whose mana and vitality were drained shook off my hand with a yelp.

She jumped back in a panic to get away and fell onto the carpet.

Megumin knocked into Darkness who was still grabbing her neck and held the back of her head, moaning as she kicked her legs in the air.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kotatsu>

“Don’t look down on me. After all, I am Kazuma-san who crossed swords with demon army bosses and bounty targets. You think a clumsy Crusader and a silly Arch Wizard could defeat me? Come back after raising a few levels.”

I stuck my head out from the Kotatsu and lectured them.

“... Kazuma-san is getting good at using tricks, how troubling. But I am fine with that, no one will fight for my special seat if Kazuma stays in his Kotatsu.”

Aqua who was glued to the couch before the fireplace said as she watch the other two girls.

The two of them finally stood up with tears in their eyes and glared at me.

Even though they were looking at me like this, I don’t feel the current me will lose to anyone.

Going out in this cold, ridiculous...

— Oh no.

“Hey, this is bad. I have an emergency, I need to go to the toilet. It is a bit wilful, but can we have a short truce. Sorry, could you carry the mat to the door of the toilet please?”

I asked the two of them as I send mana to the Kotatsu’s heater.

This Kotatsu uses ore that will heat up if you inject it with mana.

So the moment I got out of the kotatsu, the mana supply will stop and the kotatsu will cool down.

Fortunately, I robbed some mana from Megumin, so it will be warm for quite some time.

I thought the two of them will be mad, but they exchange glances and followed my instruction obediently.

Megumin got in front of me, grabbed the edge of the mat under the kotatsu and said.

“You take the other side side. Let’s throw this man outside.”

“On it. Aqua, I know you don’t want to leave the fireplace, but lend us a hand. You just need to help us open the door.”

“Stop, staph! That’s inhumane! Hey, stop...! If you don’t stop, I will use ‘Steal’! I will use ‘Steal’!!”

‘Steal’ was very effective against ladies.

But Megumin merely sneered.

“We already took a bath together, there’s nothing to be shy about. If you intentionally steal my panties, you will be branded a lolicon forever!”

She, she don’t mind at all!

Why is she so unhesitant! Why is she so manly!

“I, I had been seen naked, and washed Kazuma’s back too, something like steal... steal is... Uugghh...”

Darkness wanted to compete with Megumin, but she was hesitant and became embarrassed.

“Let’s go, throw this hikikomori who turned into a bum in winter out!”

“Don’t do that! Let’s, let’s talk! Right! When it gets warmer I will let you cast two explosion in one day! I will use ‘Drain’ to take mana from Aqua and let you use explosion twice instead of once a day!”

Megumin reacted strongly to these words, but was refuted by Aqua.

“Don’t wanna! Why must my valuable holy mana be used to do such silly things! My mana stem from the deep faith of the Axis cultists. This is the important mana given to me by my precious devotees! I won’t let you!”

“She might say that, but I will take responsibility in getting the mana!”

“Ughhh... One day... Two explosion...”

“Ugghh... Steal... Steal... No, but, it might not be the panties in one shot...”

Aqua was wailing while Megumin and Darkness was troubling over their thoughts. At this moment.

“Satou-san! Are you here, Satou-san!”

Someone was knocking the door loudly.

Part 2

The sudden visitor was prosecutor Sena who charged me in court some time earlier.

“Satou-san, it’s terrible! The lizard runners outside... the town...”

Sena who came rushing in with a pale face saw me with my head sticking out from the kotatsu and turned silent.

“... Can I ask what are you doing?”

“As you can see, I am keeping warm as it is cold today. Ah, please close the door, it is getting cold.”

After Sena heard what I said, she sighed deeply and closed the door.

“... Satou-san. You defeated two demon army bosses and even took out the mobile fortress Destroyer. I have the highest praise and respect for you, but...”

What was with this demeaning attitude just because I am keeping warm inside a kotatsu?

“Ignore that bum. What brings you here in such a hurry?”

“Ah, right! A large number of monsters called lizard runners showed up and the adventurers in town are fighting them. The lizard runners aren’t that dangerous... But it is their breeding season and the queen of the lizard runners was born...!”

According to Sena,

Right now was the breeding season of this monster known as lizard runner.

This monster was a herbivorous, bipedal lizard and was normally not dangerous. But once a large sized female known as princess runner was born, the lizard runners will cause all sorts of trouble.

The lizard runners will congregate under the rule of the princess runner, and the group will compete to be the mate of the princess lizard.

And their way of competing was unique...

— Running.

Standing straight up, using their two legs, they will run at incredible speed.

Just like Frilled-neck Lizards that was popular a while back.

And they don't compete against each other, but instead sought out other fast species, race them and leave them in the dust.

And the one that could win the most will become the princess runner's mate and become the king runner.

Why princess, shouldn't the spouse of a king be the queen. And if you are calling them lizard runner, why is it king runner, not lizard king? It seemed that you will lose if you retort this out loud.

I hated this world even more after listening to this nonsensical way the lizard runner lives, but this was no small matter for people traveling by horse, dragon or bird.

In order to race, the usually docile lizard runner will kick their opponent, be it a horse or a dragon.

And then, it will run away.

The kick of a lizard runner was powerful and will break bones if it hits the wrong place.

With reports of princess runner surfacing, the guild handed out quest to take down lizard runners...

“And so, I am here at Satou-san's place!”

Sena looked straight at me with eyes full of anticipation.

... Absurd.

“What do you mean? Didn't the guild issued out extermination quests? Why are you here then? Someone will do something about it anyway.”

“What are you saying, didn't Satou-san said that time when the demon king army boss occupied the dungeon— ‘The obligation of the adventurer is to protect the citizens who lived in fear of monsters’.”

Did, did I said such a cool line before... I think I did.

“Nah, it's useless to say that to the kotatsu bum over there alright? I don't think Kazuma who cleared his debts and made a tidy profit will work before the money runs dry.”

Aqua who was staring at the fireplace said without even looking this way.

“Yeah, Kazuma has the lowest level among us after all. It's natural for him to be scared.”

And now they are saying such nonsense...

“...Hey you, when did my level became the lowest here. Aqua you... I remember your level is rather high after defeating all those undead. Megumin...”

“Level 26.”

Megumin showed her adventurer card proudly.

“... Why is it so high?”

“I defeated the mobile fortress Destroyer and demon king army boss Vanir. Most of the minions are done in by me too. Of course my level is high.”

Are you kidding me?

And with such a high level, she should have plenty of skill points. But she used all of it to raise the power of her explosion spell.

However, there is one person who has a lower level than me.

“Darkness should be lower level than me right? You can’t hit the enemy, so you should have the more problem leveling up. I don’t know what are Lizard runners, but it’s not time for me to take the field yet. Darkness, go grind some levels...”

“Fufu.”

Darkness smirked.

She then shoved her adventurer card in my face arrogantly.

“During the fight with demon army king Vanir, the masked doll he created were basically defeated by me. They are difficult for normal people to handle, so their experience yield is high...!”

She said victoriously.

The card displayed her level to be 20.

I was annoyed by Darkness who was shoving the card into my face.

“Pui.”

“Ahhh!?”

I spat on the card on reflex due to my annoyance and Darkness screamed.

While stealing a glance at Darkness who was wiping her card in tears, I got out of the kotatsu, took out my card and looked.

The displayed level was 13.

... Oh no, my level had become the lowest before I knew it.

I heard Aqua and the others said that the weak adventurer job could raise level much easier than high tier jobs...

Sena tilted her head as she looked at me studying my card. She looked me straight in the eye and said without any doubt...

“What is Satou-san’s level? Satou-san crossed swords with a demon king army boss before, it must be really high...”

“Hey you guys, ready your gears, we are going to do some quests!”

I interjected Sena with my hasty announcement.

Part 3

“I think Kazuma couldn’t handle that woman. Did you suffer a lot during your stay in prison?”

Megumin asked the me who was tired physically and mentally as we made our way to the blacksmith in town.

“They didn’t do anything overboard, but they didn’t treat me really well either... She seemed to be thinking of me as an ally of justice or something. I am the type who would prefer not to work and live a stable life, so I wish she won’t look at me with eyes full of expectation.”

After I defeated the demon king army boss Vanir, Sena comes to me whenever there was trouble.

I wasn’t someone with special powers like Mitsurugi.

My stats were lower than normal adventurers except for my luck.

To be honest, defeating the demon king army boss and getting bounties were just luck.

But to come to me whenever there was trouble...

“I feel the same way as that prosecutor and hold Kazuma in high regards. Even with someone stronger as an opponent, you will unscrupulously grab their weak point and run if things turn bad.”

“Are you praising or mocking me!?”

We reached the blacksmith as we spoke.

Actually, I wasn’t simply lazing around during winter.

I accepted Vanir’s proposal and started developing merchandize that was easy to manufacture. In order to do so, I learned a new skill.

I asked the owner of the blacksmith to teach me and learnt the skill ‘construct’.

With this skill, I could work with metals and even create all sorts of items.

By the way, I stopped all of my work the moment I created the kotatsu.

As payment for teaching me the skill, I taught the owner of the smithery the technique of making katanas from my vague TV memories.

My cheap short sword was breaking, and with the influx of cash, I asked the owner to create new equipment for me.

He promised to sell the first blade he craft using this technique to me.

I was worried that the chest plate, gauntlet and shin guards won’t be enough, so I requested for a full set of armor.

I shut myself at home for pretty long, it should be done by now—

“Yo~! Old man, is it done? Is my sword done?”

“Welco... Oh, it’s just you. That katana you taught me to make is done. The shape looked just as you described...”

The owner took out a sheathed sword and handed it to me.

That sword was curved just like a katana.

I picked it up and drew it...

“Oh... It looks great...! It is not as pretty or sharp as the real thing, but it will do.”

“Sorry about it being imperfect! I researched that ‘quenching’ technique of yours but don’t get it at all. Nonetheless, this is interesting work. You just need to write the name of the sword on this magic talisman and paste it on the hilt to complete it. This will be your precious sword from now on, so pick a nice name.”

The owner said with a crude smile as he took out the armor I ordered.

Naming the sword...

I observed the body of the sword and thought of the sword names that came up in games.

“Kazuma Kazuma, hurry up with the naming. I had been staying home all winter, my urges had been piling up!”

“... But you cast your explosion every day. Be patient, naming a weapon is important. I need to think about it carefully...”

I replied Megumin who was really hyper and rushing me and fell into deep thought.

Muramasa... Masamune... Kotetsu...

“Here, the full plate armor for men you ordered. I just put lots of adamantite in it, a high quality equipment for the adventurers of this town. Use it with care.”

As I was thinking about which weapon to use, the owner brought the armor over.

The full plate armor that was glowing green was intimidating, making me feel that I would get injured if I was to wear this.

I put on the armor gleefully...!

“How is it. It fit just fine right?”

The owner said confidently.

The size fit just right. Although it fits...

“... It’s too heavy, I can’t move.”

“..... Is, is that so...”

The owner looked at me as if I was a pitiful child.

It seemed that with my weak stats, I couldn't equip such high class equipment.

Fortunately, my size was rather standard and the owner accepted my request to return the goods.

I was planning to raise my attack and defense drastically, but this couldn't be helped.

I guess getting a new weapon would do for now.

"All that's left is the naming of the sword. I have to do it seriously... Kiku-Ichimonj... Kogarasumaru..."

As I was pondering with my arms crossed, Megumin suddenly came to my side and said.

"Chunchunmaru."

"... What did you just say?"

"I said Chunchunmaru. This name is now 'Chunchunmaru'."

Before I realized it, Megumin was already hugging my sword tightly.

... No no no.

"How could you call it such a strange name. This is an expensive custom made item okay? As my precious sword, I have to give it a cool name..."

"Ah!"

The owner yelled when he saw Megumin hugging the sword.

I looked at the sword and saw the talisman on the hilt of the sword.

On the talisman was...

"... Miss, you already wrote the name down..."

"I did. From today onwards, this sword will be known as Chunchunmaru. That's settled, Kazuma! Let's do a quest!"

"You you, what have you done! Ahhh... my sword...!"

Megumin pulled me with her as I held my sword that was bestowed with a weird name.

"— Hey you... That sword cost a lot of money, and you just... If I used this sword to defeat the demon king, it would be displayed in a museum and labeled 'The weapon of the legendary hero, holy sword Chunchunmaru'— How are you going to fix that!"



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“I already picked a cool name in the place of the indecisive Kazuma, what are you unhappy about. Compared to that, can Darkness convince Aqua to come out?”

Megumin said a bit uneasily.

We asked Darkness to persuade Aqua while we went to collect my weapons, but...

“Don’t wanna— ! I don’t wanna go today! Tomorrow! I will go if it is warm tomorrow! I have a bad feeling about today, this is the instinct of a goddess!”

“Stop spilling nonsense about goddesses! Hurry up, stop grabbing the couch... Ah, don’t, don’t pull my hair!”

— In the mansion, we found Aqua and Darkness wrestling on the ground.

The persuasion was a failure... There was no other options.

“Darkness, let Aqua watch the house since she is so unwilling. The three of us will be fine.”

“As expected of Kazuma! It is rare, but you could say good things sometimes! Look Darkness, Kazuma-sama already said that, so unhand me!”

Aqua got me as an ally and started slapping Darkness who was grabbing her hand.

“Never mind that— The two of you, this is our first quest in a long time. After getting the reward, let’s eat a good one outside. A hot pot party!”

The goddess of party reacted strongly when I said that.

The other two realized my intentions and looked at each other—

“That’s right, we are beginning our adventure anew after the end of winter. For the long road ahead, let’s eat lavishly tonight.”

“Great, let’s have fun outside. I know a good shop that caters to nobles. I will make a reservation there tonight.”

They said something like that immediately.

Darkness released Aqua’s collar, and Aqua started talking uneasily.

“... Nah, everyone, how about buying the ingredients back and having a hot pot party at home? Right, I will prepare the ingredients for everyone who will be tired after adventuring. So I think it would be better to have a party here.”

We replied to Aqua together.

“Please watch the house.” x3

“Wahhhh, I was wrong don’t leave me behind— !”

Part 4

The open plain outside of town was still covered in remnants of snow.

“Alright, this is a good spot. Let’s begin!”

On top of one of the few trees, I assumed a sniping position and gave the signal to start the operation.

“I am ready no problem! Let the weak Kazuma level up fast and take out the demon king for me soon.”

Aqua crossed her arms under the tree I was at, watching my target like a Nio.²

Now that she mentioned it, we do have the goal of defeating the demon king...

“Yeah, Aqua’s support spells are taking effect. With this, I can take on any number of them!”

With her sword sticking into the ground, Darkness stood coolly with both hands on the hilt and looked very dependable.

“Leave any stragglers to me. I will blow them all away if they get too close.”

Megumin took a stance with her staff with a fearless smile.

— With levels over 20 (except for me) and fully equipped, we could be considered mid tier leveled adventurers.

“Then let’s get it on! Proceed as planned! I will snipe the king runner and the princess runner! Without these two, the lizard runner will disperse, so we can ignore the small fries. If the snipe fail and they charge us, I will snipe again while Darkness tanks them. If it still fails, Megumin will blow them all away with explosion before they surround us, I will take out any stragglers from up high. Aqua will support everyone with magic... Alright, begin!”

We had always acted impulsively but right now, we adopted a plan that took into account the possibility of failure.

I won’t be a rookie forever.

Using farsight while on top of a tree, I could see the group of lizard runner from far away.

The lizard runner looked just as Sena described.

Just like a frilled-necked lizard becoming green, larger and walking upright on two legs.

In that group of lizard runners, There was one that was twice as big as the others.

It had a crest-like horn on its head and the other lizard runners followed it like servants.

“Hey Aqua, there is a lizard runner with a crest-like horn on its head. I know that is the princess, but which is the king?”

“How would I know which one is the king. The king runner... should be the one that looks like it is full of itself right?”

I wanted to retort how to tell if a lizard is full of itself, but gave up. I was the stupid one for asking her.

I could tell which one was the princess runner with its features, but to find the lizard that won the race...

I found a lizard which the princess runner was hanging all over.

Right, the winner will be the mate of the princess.

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nio>

That one who was closest to the princess should be the king runner.

I aimed for that lizard and pulled my bow tight...!

“Oh, leave it to me Kazuma, I have an idea! If the winner of the race is the king runner, then it must be the fastest! Amongst the holy spells, there is one that does the opposite of repelling enemy and attracts monsters! If we call the lizards over, the fastest to reach must be the king!”

Our plan was to snipe the king from afar, but knowing which is the target was important.

But Aqua’s method of drawing the enemy over to identify the king was putting the cart before the horse.

“Hey what are you saying. Do creatures like goddess have the habit of pouring oil into fire? I already found the king, so don’t...”

“Force Fire!”

Before I finished, Aqua chanted her spell.

A bluish white flame ignited in Aqua’s hand. After seeing that flame, I wanted to beat her up even though I was not a monster.

The emotion of me wanting to scold her for doing unnecessary things must be the effect of that spell right?

The lizard runner which were far away also saw the flames. They cried agitatedly and charged at Aqua.

“How fast!” x3

Darkness, Megumin and I were amazed by the lizards’ speed.

Megumin started chanting explosion magic in a hurry, but at that pace, they would be here before she finish.

Darkness stood before Megumin while I set my bow and yelled angrily at Aqua.

“You moron, do you feel unhappy unless you mess something up! No one asked you to pretend being a retard, so clean up your act! It would be over if I took out the king and princess, why the heck are you drawing them here?!”

“Why, why are you saying all this suddenly?! I only wanted to help, why are you so angry! Ahh, I knew it! The development will be the same as usual right?! The lizards will mess me up bad! I already knew this is coming, so get it over with!”

After I lectured Aqua, she shouted exasperatedly, and laid on the ground in a tantrum with her limbs spread out wide.

“Cast support spells and healing you fool! Don’t lie there, you will get trampled!”

As I shouted, I aimed for the king runner closing in at amazing speed and shot at him with the snipe skill.

My aim was true and the arrow hit the suspected king lizard who was at the head of the pack right between the eyes.

The accuracy of snipe was dependent on luck.

Even though I had scant experience with a bow, my accuracy was high because of my strong innate luck.

I thought the other lizards would falter after taking out the king, but somehow, the other lizards became more fierce.

“Hey Aqua, don’t just lie there! I took out the one that looked like the king, but they became even more aggressive!”

Aqua was still lying on the ground with her limbs spread out wide.

“If you take out the king first, the other lizards will be fired up since they have the chance to be the new king. You should have taken out the lizard princess first.”

“Tell me something that important earlier ahhhhhh! Me, Megumin! Megumin! Is your spell ready!? I permit the use of explosion! The distance is enough, blow them all away!”

“Leave it to me, wahahha! Taste my explosive magic! ‘Explosion’— !”

But, nothing happened.

“!? Ahhhh! Mana! Kazuma, I don’t have enough mana to cast explosion!”

“Ah!? Why at a time like this... Oh shit!”

It was because I drained Megumin’s mana this morning!

“What what what do we do Kazuma! The princess runner! The princess runner is really...!”

I looked, and the large lizard with a crest— the princess lizard and its servants were charging us furiously, angered by the death of its mate the king runner.

Aqua laid below the tree I was on while Megumin was besides her.

Darkness stood before the two of them to guard them...!

“Hahahahaha! Bring it on—!”

She shouted in high spirit.

The lizard runner mob crashed into Darkness who was standing before Megumin!

“Wahahaha! Ka, Kazuma-san Kazuma-san!!”

Aqua finally screamed as the lizard runners rammed her, but I don’t have time for her.

The princess runner determined that I was the enemy and glared at me alone.

From the speed she was running, she must be planning to jump right up and kick me down the tree, how scary!

“Tank a little while longer Darkness! I will take care of them now!”

“Don’t mind me! Ahhhh, you, you can take your time ugghh— !”

As I listened to Darkness who was being kicked repeatedly by the lizard runner.

I drew my bow and aimed right between the eyes of the princess...!

“Kukyeee—!!”

“Snipe!”

I shot an arrow at the princess runner who was kicking at me!

At this distance, I won't miss even without snipe.

The arrow was right on target, and the leg of the princess runner lost its strength and missed me.

“In the nick of time...!”

I muttered softly to myself as the adrenaline rushed towards me who was facing a powerful foe.

The body of the princess runner hit the tree with its inertia.

Taking a defenceless cool pose after shooting the arrow, I lost my balance and fell down the tree.

The lizard runner saw me falling...!

— And got out of the way agilely.

And I fell head first to the ground and heard a dull thud.

“Ka, Kazuma!? Are you okay!? Aqua! Kazuma fell in a weird position! Use healing magic...”

As I listened to Megumin's frantic voice, my consciousness slowly—

Part 5

“.....”

“.....”

I stood there blankly, face to face with the goddess Eris.

It was a holy shrine like room I visited when Jack Frost killed me.

Like that time, I was standing right here.

Before me, with silvery white long hair and blue eyes—

Was the extraordinarily beautiful Eris.

This real goddess scratched her cheeks with her finger and said with a troubled expression.

“... Erm, please live on carefully alright? It took a lot of effort to break the rules and revive you... Sempai will forcefully resurrect you anyway, but I am always the one who suffer...”

“Sorry, I have nothing to say for myself this time, my apologies!”

After killing the princess runner, I fell from the tree and died while boosting my victory.

Even I thought this was a lousy way to die.

Eris sighed deeply.

“Your career is in adventuring, so it is understandable for your situation to be dangerous. I knew that but... you are too careless this time...”

I kept lowering my head and apologizing to Eris.

Eris suspicion was probably true, and Aqua will revive me shortly.

I troubled her again.

“Erm... What happened to the others after I died? Are they okay?”

“Yes, there is no problem. Sempai was trampled on since she laid down in a place at this and pleaded for help mid way... But while Darkness was tanking, the princess runner was down and the lizards dispersed. Megumin-san wasn't hurt thanks to Darkness protecting her. Sempai is fixing your body right now.”

Great, so the quest was sort of a success.

It's fine to let them wait for a while.

Although I died, I am unexpectedly calm.

Maybe I hit my head when I died so there wasn't any pain, or I had gotten used to it.

I looked around me as if I was sightseeing.

“... You are really calm despite dying. The people who come here are usually more confused...”

“It's normal, once in Japan, twice in this world. I visited a total of three times already.”

I answered Eris as I looked around the room.

... There was nothing here.

Eris looked quietly at me as I checked out the surrounding.

I had nothing to do, so the two of us looked at each other.

... Oh no, this is awkward.

What was taking Aqua so long.

But...

“Won't you feel bored staying in this room without anything? I don't know how many people are in this world, but do people visit often?”

Eris answered me with a smile.

“That's true. My job is to guide the people who died because of monsters... I am usually busy, but the adventurers stay indoors in the winter and I am thankfully more free. If I am bored, that means everyone is safe, so having nothing to do is great.”

Eris said with a brilliant smile.

I couldn't take it anymore. What is happening. My chest was stuffy and my face was burning up.

... I always thought there was something missing in my life in this alternate world.

Although we live under the same roof, there were no romantic development between my comrades and me at all.

All of them looked pleasant and nice. But...

The self-proclaimed goddess who daydream before the fireplace and only eat and sleep.

She welcomed her 14th birthday recently, but there was probably still legal restrictions. Competitive and troublesome explosion maniac loli.

Her figure looked great at first sight, but she had a strange fetish, a crazy daughter of nobility.

What I wanted wasn't so extreme.

I just want a gentle girl with common sense.

— That's right, the main heroine was right here.

As I was feeling awkward with my face red.

“Actually, I don't stay here all the time. I will ask someone to cover my duties and play in the mortal world sometimes... Keep this a secret okay?”

Eris-sama closed one eye and smiled mischievously like she did the last time.

Oh, hnnngg...

I nodded my head repeatedly with my blushing face when—

“Kazuma! Can you hear me Kazuma? I already used resurrection, you can return now. Get Eris to open the door quick!”

Every Time, this girl who couldn't read the mood would barge in like this.

Why couldn't you just take a little longer...

I thought about something totally different from my previous thought and almost clicked my tongue.

“Just wait a bit more. I still have many things to say with Eris-sama. Please take care of my body before I go back.”

I answered loudly into the void.

Eris-sama yelped “Huh!?” softly, then lowered her head shyly.

I didn't know if my voice reached her. The surrounding fell silent.

“Ah!? What are you saying!? Don't spout nonsense and get back here! Raise your level defeat the demon king and return me to heaven!”

Aqua's words reminded me of reality.

— Defeat the demon king.

That's right, defeat the demon king. The low level and powerless me has to challenge the demon king.

And I had the handicap of being surrounded by problem children.

Even if I revived, I will just suffer with the three of them from now on, and take on the ridiculous homework of defeating the demon king.

I am aware of the situation.

Work hard, awaken an incredible power and defeat the demon king with luck— This damn world won't let something so good happen.

I would probably die a few more times from now on.

What do I get for working so hard?

... I didn't answer Aqua and fell into deep thought.

I pondered about my future life and the hardship I will experience from now on—

I choose starting my life over with reincarnation.

“Hey Aqua! I am tired of life and won't be going back! I want to reincarnate as a baby and start over! Send my regards to the others!”

“Ehhh!?”

When she heard what I said, Eris yelled.

In the end...

“What nonsense are you saying! Wait!”

As I listened to Aqua's panicking voice, I turned to Eris.

“In summary, Eris-sama, I have a request. I won't ask for much— but if possible, I hope to be a boy in my next life. I hope to be born into a family with a beautiful elder step sister and a cute younger sister.”

“Wait, wait a minute! Please, please wait!”

Eris seemed to be panicking when she heard what I said.

Aqua's voice rung out again.

“Kazuma! Darkness said that if you are not coming back, she will doodle on your face! She is holding a marker excitedly now!”

... I, I won't be shaken by something like this.

I'm dead anyway, do what you want with my bod...

“...? What are you doing Megumin? What are you doing to Kazuma's clothes... Hmmm Megumin!? Wait, wait Megumin!?”

“Hey, hey stop, what are you all doing to my body? Don’t desecrate the dead, you will be cursed!!”

How were they abusing my body?

While I was feeling uneasy, Aqua screamed.

“Megumin! Megumin!! Wait, Kazuma-sama! Come back! Hurry!!”

“Hey stop it! Aqua, stop Megumin! Stop...! E, Eris-sama, please! Please open the door! I beg of you!!”

Looking at how frantic I was, Eris chuckled and snapped her fingers.

A door of pure white appeared before us.

I stood before that door in a hurry...

“Well then, Kazuma-san. I will pray that you will not come here again. Bon Voyage!”

Listening to Eris bid me farewell, I opened the door...!

Part 6

Megumin’s face that was red from anger appeared before my eyes.

She was sitting on me, tidying up the clothes on my chest.

“... Hey, what are you doing? I even thought of you as the only one with common sense except for being a explosion maniac with a strange name, what did you do to me?”

Megumin didn’t answer, stood up and said.

“Hey, if you have any comments about my name then let’s hear it... It’s all your fault for pulling a joke saying you are ‘not coming back’. If you throw such a tantrum again, I will do something even worse.”

She thought it was a joke, but she will get even more mad if I told her I was half serious.

I checked every part of my body and sat up.

“... Nah, what did you do to me? Depending on what happened, I might be too shy to look Megumin in the face from tomorrow onwards.”

I glanced at Darkness and saw her squatting on the ground with her hand covering her red face.

I threw a suspicious gaze at Aqua who was squatting at the side, waiting for me to stand up...

“... What are you making a sacred goddess say? Ask her yourself.”

She averted her face.

“Nah, tell me Megumin. If not, I will be very conscious of you from tomorrow onwards...”

“You will know after taking a bath at home... Instead of that, how is your head? Anything uncomfortable?”

I touched my head, there wasn’t any problems.

I remembered I died falling from a tree.

“Kazuma, your head was bent in an incredible direction. I thought you were acting out a scene in ‘the exorcist’. Your wounds are serious, so no fighting for the next two weeks.”

I felt a chill after hearing Aqua’s words.

‘The exorcist’ was that horror movie where the head could turn 180 degrees.

My head turned like that?

Megumin patted my shoulders as I was shivering while holding my head.

“Let’s retire early for the day. Look, thanks to Kazuma, the lizard runners had dispersed. Thank you for your hard work. I will report to the guild, so go back and rest, Kazuma.”

Megumin used a gentle voice I never heard before to say this.

She must be worried about me and my death experience.

I accepted her kindness gratefully, and returned to the mansion with Darkness whose face was red and refuse to look at me in the eye, and Aqua who was covered in footprints of the lizard runners.

— After reaching town, Megumin headed for the adventurers guild.

And then, on our way back to the mansion.

“Speaking of which, why did you say something so silly, Kazuma? You are living a wonderful life surrounded by beauties, what are you so unhappy about that you refused to come back?”

Darkness nodded when she heard what Aqua said.

Looking at the two of them, I—

“... Fufu.”

“Ah!” x2

When the two of them heard me snicker, they yelled.

When we reached the mansion and was about to open the door, Aqua harassed me.

“Nah, I think you are looking down on us recently right? Didn’t I revived you too today— Although Kazuma didn’t want to! Nah, stop treating me like an unwanted child! Revere me more! If you go to the capital of water and hot spring, Alcanretia you can find lots of my statue and merchandize!”

I think it was weird to make figures of a goddess you idolize, but I said to the noisy Aqua behind me without turning back:

“Moron, when did I treat you like an unwanted child. Without you, who will clean the toilet? For someone who proclaims to be the goddess of water, there are place more suitable for you to clean then that right?”

“That’s what I am talking about! I am the goddess of water, not the goddess of the toilet!! I am saying your attitude is bad, you have to treat me nicer!”

I entertained the teary eyes Aqua casually, entered the mansion and took off my equipment such as my chest armor.

I turned and saw that Darkness was taking off her armor that was battered by the kicks of the lizard runners.

Darkness kept peeking at my lower abdomen after taking off my armor.

...?

When I looked at her curiously. Darkness averted her eyes with a red face.

I was worried what it was about, but I just revived and still felt a bit tired.

Since I was going to rest early, I went to take a bath.

Entering the bathroom, I reached for the magic heater, used mana to heat the water and stripped in the changing room...

And charged outside.

“Where is Megumin! She isn’t back yet?! That stupid loli, don’t think I will hold back because she is a kid. I will strip her with steal and let her enjoy the same treatment!”

“Megumin said she will stay in the inn with her friend for a few days after visiting the adventure guild ahhhhh!?”

After seeing I was nude, Darkness who was reading a magazine on the couch hid her face into the magazine.

I still don’t get what her standard of shame was, and had no time for her.

Aqua looked at me who was grinding my teeth with bloodshot eyes.

“..... Hey Kazuma, having confidence is a good thing, but I think being too cocky is not good.”

“Mo, moron! Weren’t you there when Megumin wrote this!? Damn, damn you ahhhh!”

I escaped back into the bathroom.

And wash the words ‘Holy sword Excalibur ↓’ from my lower abdomen.



Gifting these Shameless Blockheads with a Warm Welcome!

Part 1

I was sitting on the couch in the living room when the nervous Megumin pleaded with me.

“I apologize what happened earlier... Please turn back into the old Kazuma.”

Megumin was sitting properly on the carpet, lowering her head to me who was lying back on the couch which had a furry coat draped over it.

After Megumin stayed outside for a short while, she had been acting like this since she returned.

What happened earlier...?

Ahhh, when she doodled on my body there.

“I am not bothered by such trivial matters. There is no need for quarrels if you have money. Forget that, how about having some tea, Megumin? I got a huge batch of quality tea leaves.”

I said with a smile at Megumin.

Megumin started snivelling, she was probably moved by my generosity.

“I am really sorry! I was wrong, please turn back into the old Kazuma! The current Kazuma is really disgusting! Please! Please!!”

“Why do you keep saying strange things like ‘turn back to the old me’. I am always like this.”

A teacup was presented to my seat before the fireplace gracefully.

“The red tea of the highest grade is ready, Kazuma-san.”

Aqua who passed the red tea to me said as she sat beside me.

I took a sip...

“... This is plain water.”

“Ara ara, look how clumsy I am. My apologies, Kazuma-san.”

“Don’t worry, you can just make another pot of tea. Thank you Aqua-san. I will drink this anyway.”

“What is happening!? What happened these few days while I am away!? Please, turn back to normal you two!”

I calmed the noisy Megumin down as I sent Aqua to brew a new pot of tea.

Aqua probably touched the tea accidentally and turned the tea into plain water.

However, someone as calm as the Buddha like me won’t get angry.

... At this moment, Darkness gestured at Megumin who fell into confusion.

Darkness told the tired looking Megumin what happened these past few days—

Part 2

—The next morning after Megumin ran away.

“That loli bitch ahhhh! I will strip her when she comes back! Absolutely! I will do it! I will make that wild kid beg for mercy!”

The slightly blushing Darkness said to me as I raged.

“You will be arrested if you do that, Kazuma. In, instead of that, can you tell me specifically how you will make Megumin beg for mercy...”

The living room.

I was hugging my knees inside my kotatsu screaming my head off while Darkness questioned me curiously.

Aqua who was in front of the fireplace said:

“So noisy in the morning. Really, stop squabbling. Everyone should be calm like me. Other than bath time, I had been here after coming back yesterday.”

“I don’t want a bum who spends the entire day right there to say that about me! Damn it! That ink is hard to wash off after it dries! I won’t forgive that girl! I can see her crying face right before my eyes!”

“Tell me in detail how you made her cry...”

Suddenly, the main door was knocked.

“Is that Megumin! You came back?”

“In detail... erm, that...”

I got out of the kotatsu and was planning to walk to the door...!

“Hahahaha! Thou think it’s the crimson magic girl with a screw loose? Too bad, it’s moi! As the stubborn shop owner who has amazing talent in holding on to trash is terrible at judging things, moi, who could see though all sort of things will negotiate business with you. Rejoice at moi arrival and honored by moi presence. Come, let me see the merchandize thou plan to place in our shop...! Hmmm?”

Over there was a devil wearing a strange mask.

Seeing him, Aqua slowly got up from the couch before the fireplace—

“Nah, how did you get in here? Outside this mansion is a holy barrier meant to keep out harmful insects like you.”

“Ahh. You mean that half baked thing that was covering the mansion? So it was a barrier. It was too weak, so I thought it was a failed product by a rookie Priest. Pardon moi, but it broke when the powerful moi merely passed through it.”

Aqua who got down from the couch stood in front of Vanir.

“Ara ara, although you are saying that, you are tattered all over, Devil-san. How should I say this... I never thought the legendary duke of hell would get so beat up over a barrier of this level.”

She smiled innocently as she curiously poked at Vanir’s crumbling body.

“Ahahaha! This body is but dust anyway! Moi have plenty of substitutes. Moi was just curious about the quality of that thin layer outside the mansion. Well, it isn’t too bad for a newbie priest huh? Quite good for a human— and rookie priest! Hahaha!”

Aqua furrowed her brows, staring at a close distance from the laughing Vanir like a delinquent.

Vanir matched Aqua’s eye level and glared back.

“Hey hey, this looks bad. Darkness, help me stop these two...! ... What are you doing there? Why are you turning away?”

“... It’s nothing.”

She was asking me something just now, and was probably throwing a tantrum now because I ignored her.

Darkness snuggled into the kotatsu by herself, ignoring the commotion that was happening.

“Hey you two, I know it in your nature to fight, but this is my house. Stop that for now.”

After I intervened reluctantly, the two of them pulled away from each other.

“Nah Kazuma. I don’t know the specifics— Could it be that you are making things like kotatsu in order to do business with that thing? Nah, are you going to collude with that pest? With that parasite that steals souls and always finding trouble with humans in order to live off their negative emotions? Really, what an unfunny joke! Fufu!”

“Ahaha, Devils like moi are trustworthy since we honour our contracts. Unlike those who target innocent people and gather them with lies like ‘believers will receive salvation’, a scam group that con money under the guise of helping the poor. What are the common catch phrase they have... ah, like ‘God is always watching over you’. Hoho, preposterous! So that guy who was caught recently peeping at the bathroom with gentle eyes is actually a god?! Ahahaha!”

The two of them laughed without emotion...

“.....” x2

And fell silent suddenly.

“Sacred Exorcism!”

“Elegant Shedding!”

In response to Aqua’s sudden shout, a pillar of light appeared from under Vanir’s feet.

But Vanir immediately threw his mask away.

His original body was consumed by the light pillar and destroyed, but the mask which was his true body evaded the exorcism spell.

When it fell onto the carpet on the ground, it began constructing a new body.

Aqua lunged towards the mask and attempt to peel the mask from the new body.

“Ahahhah, so this is it! This is your true body! I caught it! I finally caught it! Well then, what should I do?! How should I deal with this thing?”

“Ahahaha, even if thou destroy moi mask, there will be a 2nd or 3rd me one day...! Hey, don't pull moi mask off while I am talking, moi body will crumble! At least wait for moi to say moi line...”

“Hey calm down. It is about time to settle down.”

I once again intervene between Aqua who was peeling off the mask excitedly and Vanir who was resisting with a tattered body.

— Vanir kneeled on the carpet as he appraised the items I had made.

“Hmm. Moi judgement of thou is spot on. This will sell. It will definitely sell well. This Kotatsu thing is also a great tool to keep one warm.”

“.....”

Darkness who hid her legs in the Kotatsu kicked Vanir's hand which was meddling with the Kotatsu curiously away.

I don't know why Darkness had been throwing a tantrum from just now, but I hope she won't interfere with the business discussion.

“Hmm, give moi a quote then. The previous agreement was ten percent revenue of the sold products to be paid monthly... Brat, art thou interested in selling the intellectual rights of the product itself? Including all of these items, moi am willing to buy it for three hundred million Eris.”

“Three hundred million!?” x3

We shouted at the same time while Vanir inspect a rubbery object I created.

Three hundred million...! Three hundred million is an amount you can live an entire life without working as long as you don't splurge!

We were too shocked to moved, but Vanir continued speaking.

“But moi thinks getting the monthly payout is a good idea too. After setting up the manufacturing line, thou can get one million Eris every month. We can tie down the detail when we move into the retail phase... By the way, what is this thing used for?”

One million a month or one time three hundred million payout.

Oh no, what should I do, my life suddenly went into easy mode!

It might not sell so well forever, so I should take the three hundred million?

No, in order to not worry about the money in my account running dry, maybe getting a monthly payout would be better?

Oh right, the one making the deal is this devil.

This fellow is wandering around town with this mask on, wouldn't he get arrested?

"This is known as a 'balloon', it is a toy that will become bigger if you blow into it. Let me play with it."

Aqua took the rubber from Vanir and started blowing.

"Oh. Give me one too..."

Darkness was curious and placed the rubber onto her lips.

... At this juncture, I am too afraid to tell them they are failed condoms I gave up on producing because I couldn't make it thinner.

"Any, anyway, wouldn't people notice if you walked around town in that get up?! Wouldn't people shout 'that's a demon king army boss' and attack you?"

"? What nonsense are you saying. This mask is different from moi previous one. Can't thou see the 'II' shining brightly on moi forehead?"

So what.

Darkness gestured at me before I could retort.

"Kazuma. The personality of that devil is problematic, but he won't do things like arson, murder or robbery. He seemed to have given up the maintenance of the demon king's castle barrier., so the higher ups of the adventurers guild want to observe him for now. Besides, he is staying in Wiz's shop, so if anything happens, the reputable shop owner will stop him in time."

Darkness whispered to me as I snuggled in the Kotatsu.

I see, as long as Vanir don't create any crisis, instead of aggravating him, it was better to leave him alone.

This devil was an ex-boss of the demon king army after all.

Who knows how much casualty there will be if they attack him head on.

"In summary of the above, the demon king army boss is deemed to have been defeated. The guild won't ask for the bounty money to be returned."

That would be a great help.

I finally had a little chance of making it rich, I wouldn't want to be burdened with debt again.

... But could you please stop speaking with a serious face while playing with contraceptives?

"Hmmm. It will take some time before the product is ready for retail. We can decide on the payment method then. Moi am a bit worried about the shop and will take moi leave now."

"That's great. Or else you will stink up my holy sanctuary. Go, get lost!"

Vanir was chased out by Aqua who was waving her hand, and he left begrudgingly.

— One million monthly or one time three hundred million...

Part 3

“— These two had been acting this way ever since then.”

“I see. I finally understand why these two are acting like fake celebrities.”

After listening to Darkness’ explanation, Megumin looked at me and said.

By the way, my favorite Kotatsu had been taken away by Vanir.

I thought I will fight with Aqua over the special seat in front of the fireplace, but after gaining financial stability, my heart became as generous as the sky.

Aqua and I sat on the coach before the fireplace cordially.

Megumin who stared at us blankly for a moment finally stood up.

“Anyway, it is great that we have money. Since funding is no longer a problem... Let’s grind some quest! We need to keep raising Kazuma’s level!”

Megumin said with a cheerful smile while holding her staff...

“Ah? Don’t wanna, what are you saying? We already have so much money, why do we still need to work, raise levels? That doesn’t matter anymore.”

I received the second cup of plain water from Aqua, and said unhesitantly while sipping it.

... Hey, it’s about time you let me drink real tea.

“... Ah?”

I said to the stunned Megumin:

“It happened before right, we prepared the equipment and drew up a battle plan, but I still died. I have decided. I won’t go adventuring anymore. I will work on my business from now on. I won’t do dangerous work like adventuring, and lead a stable life.”

“Nah, Kazuma-san, that won’t do. If the demon king is not defeated, it would be troubling for me.”

...Hmmm.

“Then we will make more money and hire lots of powerful adventurers. They will help us raise our levels and then help in battling the demon king. That’s right, lead an army of high level adventurers to invade the demon king's castle. How does that sound? Taking down the demon king sounds much more realistic right?”

“That’s right! As expected of Kazuma-san, we will slap the adventurer in the face with our money and squeeze their value dry. After they have whittled the demon king’s health away, we will go in and deal the final blow!”

“That’s the way. As expected of the one who followed me the longest, you are sharp.”

While Aqua and I were laughing, Megumin started trembling.

“I, I won’t acknowledge defeating the demon king through the power of money! I won’t acknowledge it! What do you think the demon king is?! The existence of demon king requires training and leveling up with comrades, awakening of your mysterious power, before finally taking him down after a hard fought battle! What the heck do you mean by hiring high level adventurers to defeat the demon king!”

“No, that might be so, but considering it pragmatically, no matter how high our levels get, there is still a limit. Even if I equip the most expensive equipment and get to a super high level, I still have the confidence of dying to the demon king in one hit... After we defeat the demon king boss and dispel the barrier, how about hiring tons of high level thieves, and ask them to use the hide technique to assassinate the demon king...”

“What is with this shameless fighting style! That should be the way the demon king army fight correct? Say something darkness! I have a feeling these two will get worse with each passing day... Darkness?”

When she heard Megumin, Darkness seemed to snap out of her deep thoughts.

“No... While watching Kazuma slowly turns into a bum, I am curious how much of a jerk he will become... Will he laze around and drown himself in alcohol and women, and start splurging his money... And in the end, he will say to me— ‘Hey Darkness, use your slutty body to earn me some cash...!’ With the belief that Kazuma will turn over a new leaf one day, I started prostituting myself...!”

“There is another depraved one over here! Ahh really, what should I do?!”

“Hey Megumin, don’t lump me together with that pervert. I am someone who died recently okay? I even broke my neck in the fight with the Lizard Runners, At least let me recover my wound in peace.”

“Didn’t you hurt yourself after falling from the tree? Normally, you will need time to heal, but didn’t you recover completely after receiving perfect treatment?”

I ignored Aqua who was saying unnecessary things beside me and rubbed my neck exaggeratedly.

“... I get it.”

Megumin lowered her head and said softly.

“So you understand. Well then, I will take a nap in order to recover earlier and get back to the frontlines. I made an appointment with Dust and the guys to go drinking tonight, so someone please wake me up in the evening.”

Megumin said to me as I was about to return to my room.

“... I get it. We will go to treat Kazuma’s wounds.”

Megumin kept her head down and continued.

“Treatment? It’s fine, I will get better after idling for a while.”

“Let’s go for the treatment. To the city of water and hot spring, ‘Blah’.

“Wait, what did you say?”

I heard something about hot springs.

I will say it again because it is very important.

I heard something about hot springs.

“Hot springs!? Nah, are you talking about blah? We are going to the city of water and hot spring, Alcanretia!?”

Aqua had a bigger reaction to the word Hot Spring than me.

She claimed to be the goddess of water, so it was natural for her to be interested in the city of water and hot springs.

Speaking of hot springs.

Speaking of hot springs, you...!

“Oh, hot springs. Sounds great, after the consecutive battle with powerful enemies, I am getting mentally tired. My debts are gone too. Splurging every now and then and taking a trip to the hot springs isn’t too bad.”

“Really, Kazuma-san, why are you acting so fake about this.”

Aqua look at my profile from a close distance under the glow of the Kotatsu.

Don’t stare at me from so close.

... At this time, I noticed the eyes of Megumin who was keeping her head down shining.

“... I take it that Kazuma and Aqua is fine with the trip to the hot springs?”

I couldn’t see her face because she was lowering her head, but Megumin seemed to be smiling deviously...

“How about you, Darkness...”

“— And after I became more and more depraved, I will say this! Please don’t throw me away! I, I will do anything, Master ahhhhhh!”

After seeing the blushing and squirming Darkness lost in her own world, Megumin became stiff.

“... It would be better to leave her to watch the house.”

“... Erm, if Darkness don’t tag along, the journey there will be a bit hard...”

Megumin replied reluctantly while looking at Darkness after hearing what I said.

... The journey there?

Part 4

— The next morning.

“It’s morning! Hey, how long are you going to sleep! Is everyone ready!? Hurry and get up, move!”

It was still early, but the noisy Aqua was making a racket.

She was probably looking forward to the hot spring trip and got up very early.

As for me—

“Of course, I am ready to go! Really, those two keep saying I am a bum, just how long are they planning to sleep!?”

“Right! I will wake them up! Kazuma you go to the carriage station and keep the best seat for us.”

“Okay, leave it to me. But I will make a detour before going there.”

Detour?— I leave the job of waking those two to the puzzled Aqua.

And left the mansion with my luggage.

— The city of water and hot springs, Alcanretia.

I heard it would take a day and a half if we travel by carriage from Axel town.

If we take the first morning carriage, we will only need to camp outside for one night.

Since I don't know how long I will stay there, I wanted to tell that guy I will be away for some time.

I opened the door of the magic shop that is ready for business early in the morning, and has barely any customers.

“Welcome!... Hmmm, the brat whose active hours are similar to the undead. Why art thou here so early in the morning? If thou art looking for the owner, she had been burned to a crisp by moi punishment beam inside. Help thyself if thou want to see her.”

Vanir was working hard in packing something.

Peering into the depths of the shop, I found the burned Wiz lying on the floor.

“... Wiz is your employer correct? Is it fine to do that?”

“Don't joke with moi. If I allow the shop owner that collect junks free reign, we will be in the red even if moi works for a thousand years. She will bring in incredible goods when I am not paying attention, wiping out all the revenue moi brought in.”

I was really concerned with what exactly happened, but I was looking for this fellow today, not Wiz.

“No, actually, I am looking for you today. I will be going on a hot spring trip. So I hope to discuss our business dealings after I return.”

“Oh, so it's about that. The manufacturing line had not been set up yet, so thou can look forward to your mixed bath.”

“I I I I, I'm not looking forward to the mixed bath or anything, alright!? My neck injury hurts so I just want to go for treatment!... By the way, what are you packing? And why is Wiz burned up?”

After I asked him, Vanir showed the thing he was going to pack to me.

“That charcoal owner said while crying to moi ‘This is an excellent product! It will sell! It will definitely sell! So Vanir-san, please don't prepare your killer beam as you come near me!’. She was showing off this to moi. I am planning to return it and is packing it into boxes... thou want to buy it?”

“...? What is that, a magic item?”

“It seemed to be able to help adventurers with the problem of going to the toilet outdoors. A magically compressed portable toilet that will be ready once you open the cover. To protect the privacy of the user, it is designed to produce the sound of water.”

“That sounds great, isn't that convenient?”

For adventurers who need to camp outside, sanitary was an important issue.

“The cons are that the sound to cover the privacy of the user is too loud and will attract monsters. The water creation mechanism is too powerful, and will result in flooding...”

“Forget it then. Is there any magic item that you recommend?”

When he heard me say that, Vanir picked up a bottle from the shelf.

“Recommendations? How about the bottle that will explode once thou open it, purchased by moi debt ridden shop owner. Just thirty thousand Eris for one. If thou bring it to the bank and attempt to open it at the counter, thou will get a large sum of money. How about one?”

“Who will want that. Isn’t there any normal magic items in this shop...”

Vanir sighed deeply in response.

“The ditzy shop owner has extraordinary talent in buying things that couldn’t be used. She will buy weird things whenever moi was not paying attention...”

Vanir stopped at this point.

“... By the way, Brat. Thou mention thou art going on a hot spring trip correct?”

“...? Yes, what about it?”

Vanir shoved his mask over fiercely.

“Can thou bring this ditzy shop owner along with thou? In order to mass produce thou product, moi need a large amount of money in the near future. But with this thing in the shop, she will buy strange items and waste moi capital. This owner is only strong in her power as a lich. Moi foresight might seem powerful, but it can’t see the future of someone as strong as moi.”

“... So you want me to watch over Wiz for a while? I am fine with that. But I don’t know how Aqua who hates undead will react...”

“...The shop owner who looked thin while wearing clothes actually loves the baths. This devil that can see through everything prophercize: ‘During this trip, thou have a good chance of entering a mixed bath’.”

“Leave it to me, I will take her there!”

— When I reached the carriage station, Aqua and the others were already there waiting.

“Hey, I thought I told you to save some seats for us... What is that on your back?”

While piggybacking Wiz who was burned and showing the white of her eyes, I explained the situation to everyone.

“Hmm? Eh, I am fine with that. But this child is turning transparent.”

Unexpectedly, Aqua accepted it readily. The unconscious Wiz was really turning transparent.

“Hey hey, is that really okay? Use recovery spell... Ah, that will have the opposite effect on the undead!”

“Calm down Kazuma, use drain touch and share your life force with her!”

“Traveling out of town huh... When I was little, my father brought me to the royal capital for the birthday of the princess, I haven’t left this territory since then... Erm, what is it Kazuma, why are you holding my hand ahhhhhhh!?”

I took the hand of Darkness who was reminiscing something and use drain touch.

I used the life force I got from Darkness and pushed it into Wiz on my back. Wiz started turning opaque and regain consciousness.

“Hmmm...? Isn’t this Kazuma-san, this place is...?”

As Wiz started surveying the surrounding after waking up, Darkness started strangling my neck.

“You you you jerk! I was recalling my past memories, why must you do this so sneakily every time...!”

“Uguu, I have no choice, this is an emergency! You have the most vitality among us so it has to be you!”

“Customers! If you don’t get on now I will leave you behind!”

Part 5

Although adventurers like us could be employed as escorts, but I didn’t want to fight even if something happens. So we paid the fee and chose to be normal passengers.

I don’t want to fight.

That’s right, I died fighting the creeps around this town, so I didn’t think I could handle dangerous monsters that will attack a large group of carriages.

Fortunately, we received about a ten million Eris each from the battle with Vanir.

It was a rare chance for a vacation, so there shouldn’t be any problem with splurging a little.

“Nah Kazuma! Let’s take that carriage! My judgement says that riding that carriage will definitely be awesome. By the way, I want the window seat. I want to sit in the place where I can see the scenery clearly. Hey Kazuma, go buy the tickets. To stop the others from getting the seats on that carriage, buy it now!”

Aqua said these demeaning words as she stared at the most expensive carriage with shining eyes.

The smaller carriage had a cargo compartment built behind the passengers compartment.

The cargo compartment was already packed full of luggages.

Behind the driver were the wooden passenger seats.

There should be seats for five people there...

“... Hey Oji-san, why has one of the seats been taken? What is this? It is so bothersome.”

One of the five seats had been occupied.

On the seat was a lizard kept in a small cage.

A red eyed lizard the size of a cat looked fierce with its glowing eyes.

Eh, could this be...

“Customer, that is a young red dragon. Its owner is on that carriage over there, but he paid the fees for this dragon. Even though it will be a bit uncomfortable, I will need one of the customers to move to the cargo compartment behind...”

I see— I accepted the carriage driver’s words.

Actually, one of the tickets was lower for that carriage.

It wasn’t good to let one of us take the carriage with strangers, so let’s take this one.

“... And now, here is the problem...”

“Rock paper scissors! I think that is the best way to decide in this situation!”

When I was about to say something, Aqua interrupted me.

She seemed to realized that if this went on, she will pick the short straw just like usual.

Aqua knew from experience she will be relegated to the cargo compartment.

“Erm, well... I think I should go since I joined it out of the blue...”

I already explained to Wiz that Vanir asked me to bring her to the hot spring trip. She raised her hand timidly.

But I already got Wiz’s share of the travel fare from Vanir.

I can’t let her be treated unfairly.

“No Wiz. We should do this fairly. Alright Aqua, rock paper scissors huh. No problem.”

“Huh?”

Aqua was probably surprised by how easily I agreed to this and made a surprised sound.

...Rock paper scissors. Okay, I accept.

So rock paper scissors exist in this world too.

Maybe the Japanese who came here before me spread all sorts of culture.

Darkness and Megumin seemed fine with it and got ready.

Aqua seemed to be focusing all her strength in her fist...!

“Then let’s go! Rock paper scissors!”

I showed scissors while the other chose paper. I won alone.

As I was about to enter the carriage, Aqua stopped me.

“Who said you can leave after winning, the rule is the five of us keep playing until only one loser emerges.”

“Don’t bullshit!”

I knew she had some scheme in mind when she mentioned rock paper scissors.

... Fine.

“Hey Aqua. Want to duel with me? I will play three rounds one on one with you, if you win just one time, I will go sit in the cargo compartment.”

“Really?... Kazuma is actually an idiot right? Do you even know about probability? Kazuma’s chance of winning three in a row is astronomically low.”

I faced Aqua who was speaking arrogantly and shooed the other three people inside.

“I won’t ever lose in rock paper scissors.”

Three rounds. Rock paper...!

“— This is too weird! Too weird, you must have cheated! Please, once more! If I lose again I will go sit in the cargo compartment!”

Aqua who lost three straight in a row promptly complained to me on the verge of tears.

Really, this girl is annoying.

“Don’t go back on your words okay? If you throw a tantrum again, I will tie you up with a rope.”

After hearing what I said, Aqua sneered.

“So you accept right. No take backs Kazuma! I don’t know what you have up your sleeves, but I have a way too! Blessing!”

“Ah! How shameless!”

Aqua casted buffing spell on herself.

This spell blessing grants blessing from the gods.

The effect differs from person to person, but it will improve one’s luck for a limited time.

“Luck is part of one’s skill, including luck bestowed by magic! Let’s go! Rock paper scissors!”

I won.

“Why?!”

I gestured at Aqua to shoo her to the cargo compartment, and said at the same time.

“Actually, I have never lost in rock paper scissors since I was little, it’s incredible.”

My strong luck seemed to only work in such a situation.

“Despicable! This is a scam! This is cheating, a cheating ability! You are born with such a unique power!? Then bringing me to this world as part of your cheat item is void! Send me back now! Let me go back to the heavens you con man!”

This bitch!

“Are you looking for a fight! You are telling me my special power is ‘winning in rock paper scissors’? Are you stupid, how can I fight with monsters with such an ability! You want me to tell the demon king ‘stop bothering the people if I win rock paper scissors’ you dumb broad!”

“But! But!!”

I grabbed Aqua who refused to let the matter go.

“The most infuriating thing is you claiming to be my cheat item! Don’t make me laugh, what kind of cheat is that!? If I can return you and receive a unique ability, I want to do it right now!”

“Wahhhahhh! You actually dare say that! That hurts! Stop pulling my cheeks!!”

Part 6

I didn’t knew how long we spent on the clattering and shaking carriage.

The town we were staying in was out of sight, and unfamiliar scenery spreads out before our eyes.

The side of the carriage had a small window, I seldom leave the town and was enjoying the scenery outside casually.

Although I was an adventurer, this was the first time I set off on a journey after coming to this world.

Darkness beside me was kneeling in her seat while dressed in armour, sticking to the window like a child looking at something curiously. She stared at the scenery outside with shining eyes.

For the daughter of nobility, the world outside the town was new to her.

Maybe Megumin had seen more of the world than we did, compared to the scenery outside the windows, she was more interested in the dragon inside the cage.

Although she mumbled ‘Chomusuke is cuter’, but she was still searching her pockets for something to feed the dragon.

Wiz smiled as she patted Chomusuke’s head as it rest on her lap. For some reason, Chomusuke was sticking close to her.



— During this peaceful journey.

“Kazuma-san! Kazuma-sama! My butt hurts. It really hurts. It’s about time for someone to swap places with me!”

I can hear Aqua’s voice from the shaking cargo compartment.

... Can’t be helped.

“I will trade places with you at the next resting stop. Endure it before that.”

Aqua was overjoyed when she heard me say that, and hug her knees while she hummed.

“Wouldn’t it be better for me to change with her? By the way, why did Vanir-san suddenly ask me to go on vacation? Hehe... Vanir-san always takes care of me in little places like that. He will say ‘Wiz, just sit at the counter and smile at the customers. Please don’t work.’ He cares deeply about me...”

Wiz said with a smile.

I didn’t tell her the real reason she was tagging along with me.

I couldn’t say it.

“Hmmm~? That strange masked man is a devil, but he takes such good care of others? Does he have another hidden intention?”

“Aqua-sama, Vanir-san has his good points too. He is working hard in chasing the crows gathering at the garbage dump, the housewives in the neighbourhood calls him crow slayer Vanir-san.

Why was that devil sucking up to his neighbors?

Including our carriage, there were several carriages advancing in a single file.

On the carriages were a lot of escort adventurers and travelers, filled with all sorts of goods.

If men and carriages congregate in large numbers, weak monsters will run away.

It should be safe to be in the center of the carriage convoy.

... Even though I know how screwed up this world was.

While I was idly thinking about this.

— The first to notice was me.

I was thinking this was a good time to use it, so I used my farsight skill to watch the scenery outside the window and noticed a cloud of dust some distance away.

Although it was still far away, but from the way the dust cloud was getting bigger, I could tell something was closing in at incredible speed.

“... Hey, what is that.”

I pointed to the dust cloud and asked Darkness who was looking out the window on the other side.

Darkness who didn’t had farsight probably couldn’t see the dust cloud I was pointing at and frowned.

I had an ominous feeling and said to the driver Oji-san.

“Excuse me, I can see a cloud of dust coming our way. The speed is really fast... Do you know what is that?”

When he heard what I said, the driver who was holding the reins casually answered.

“Dust cloud? The creature in the vicinity that is fast enough to kick up a cloud would be the Lizard Runners right? But I heard the Princess Runner that was leading the pack was defeated, so it might be a sand whale shooting out sand? The only other creature that fits the bill would be ‘Hawkite runners’.”

... What is with this monster that has a joke like name.

“Ara don’t look at me like that customer. I didn’t come up with the name. This is a hybrid of hawk and black kite, the king of birds. It is a bird but couldn’t fly, on the other hand, it has extraordinary leg power. It can run at high speed, and will pounce on its prey, a very dangerous monster.”

I don’t want to be attacked by a monster with such a stupid name.

The Oji-san saw something from my expression and said with a smile:

“No problem customer. Like the Lizard Runners, these fellows mating season is during spring. In order to attract females during the bird’s mating season, the males will take part in a bravery contest known as Chicken Race. They will sprint towards some hard object that looks very painful if they crash into it, and they will avoid it at the last moment. Some of them won’t be able to stop in time and dies from the impact. These fellows have the instinct of searching for tough and hard objects. They will definitely crash into the trees or boulders beside them.”

I see. That’s a relief.

After accepting this answer, I returned to my seat once more.

And look at the dust cloud...

— It was getting nearer.

It was obviously nearer than just now.

And that dust cloud was heading straight for us.

“Excuse me, sorry for troubling you! I think they are charging us more energetically than before. Will it really be okay?”

Hearing me say that, the driver pulled the reins to slow the carriage down and squint at the dust cloud...

“... Hmmm, those are Hawkite Runners. Yup, that’s definitely it. But why are they heading this way— Something is wrong customer, maybe someone in the convoy is carrying some hard ores like adamantite. These critters will chase after hard objects. The others in the convoy seemed to have noticed too, please rest easy.....? They seemed to be heading this way. In fact, they seem to be heading towards this carriage. Or rather...!

They were definitely charging towards the passenger seats of this carriage.

Which means...!

“Kazuma! Some creatures are charging at us fast! Or rather... I think they are staring at me! What, what a passionate gaze! Ah... Ah...! Oh no, Kazuma, this is bad! If this goes on, I will collide violently with that group speeding over here and get trampled...!!”

“So it was you!!”

I felt an onsetting headache.

“Customer, I will pull over for now! That way, the escorts on the other carriages will protect this carriage and the customers!”

... I am sorry everyone, my crusader is too hard.

I whispered to Darkness.

“Hey Darkness, those monsters are aiming for you. I heard they like to crash into tough and hard objects. Their aim is your rock hard muscles.”

“Hey Kazuma, I am a cute and frail girl, stop saying rock hard muscles alright? It is because my armour contains a small quantity of adamantite. With my defensive skills on top of that... That must be the reason why they are lured here... It, it's true. Don't look at me like that. My body is not that hard...!

After the carriage stopped, Darkness and I jumped off.

“Megumin, Aqua, it's our turn to go! By right we don't need to fight, but the enemy seemed to be brought in by us this time. We have to clean up after ourselves!”

After hearing what I said, Megumin and Aqua alighted too.

“I will help too!”

Wiz shouted and got ready to alight.

“Vanir asked me to protect Wiz! I know Wiz is strong, but stay in the carriage for now! Help me protect the driver Oji-san!”

Wiz nodded in agreement, and the Oji-san who didn't know the truth shouted.

“Customer! Customer you are not hired as escorts and paid for the carriage ride! Please hide somewhere safe!”

Sorry! My comrade was probably the reason why this was happening!

The apology in my heart naturally couldn't be conveyed.

“Adventurers! We are counting on you!”

With the voice of some guy as the cue, the adventurers who took the job of carriage escorts picked up their weapons and leapt off the carriages!

Darkness walked straight towards the Hawkite group charging towards the flank of the convoy.

It was shameful to say, but I hid behind Darkness.

Even if I stepped up by myself, I will definitely die after getting hit by monsters running at such a speed.

I got Aqua to cast buffing spells and ask Megumin to prepare explosion magic to be cast at a moment's notice.

These birds with the head of a Hawk and the body of an ostrich were faster than horses and bigger than bulls.

They charged on with no signs of slowing down.

“Hey, that crusader over there! You are not an escort, so get back!”

A man who looked like a warrior said.

But Darkness didn't stop.

“Hey! The monsters are heading straight for that crusader...! It's 'decoy'! Crusaders can use luring skills to aggro the enemies! That crusader isn't an escort, but she is still pulling all the enemies towards her!”

An archer man said.

— I apologize. She was not using any skills. I apologize again.

“Nah, that crusader shows no sign of backing off in the face of so many enemies! So, so cool...! How..., how brave...!”

Some female wizard commented.

— I apologize. I think she was doing it for a completely different reason. I apologize.

As Darkness was walking forward with blushed face full of excitement, an adventurer in a thief outfit chased after Darkness with a rope in hand!

“How can I let a paying customer who is not even taking the salary for escort duty face danger! I will provide support, take this— Bind!”

“What!?”

Darkness reacted immediately when she heard that.

I heard Chris mentioned this skill before.

The skill of a thief, Bind.

When Darkness and Chris adventured together, their tactics was for Chris to use this skill on an enemy and Darkness hitting the immobile foe.

Ahh, I see.

That was the reason why the clumsy Darkness could move that fast after hearing the name of that skill.

Darkness charged towards the Hawkite in front of her... that didn't happen.

Instead, she seemed to be shielding the Hawkite the thief was targeting—

And happily ran into the space between that man and the Hawkite.

Darkness was immediately bounded by the rope and look just like a bagworm, squirming on the ground.

With a red face and heated voice, Darkness shouted at the stunned thief.

“Uguu!? how disgraceful! To be bounded before the enemy! If this goes on...! I will be trampled by that group of monsters!”

— I apologize. I am really sorry for this pervert of ours.

The monsters kicked up dust clouds as they charged at Darkness who was down on the ground.

The man who looked like a thief screamed in pain as he looked at Darkness.

“Could it be, she was afraid I will get targeted by the monster because of my skill, so she took the Bind in the place of the monster!? I am sorry! I wanted to support you but got in the way instead, forgive me!”

— I apologize! I apologize for this comrade of mine! Really, I am really sorry!

Part 7

— Chicken Race

This is a speed game that tests courage as one speed dangerously close to a cliff or obstacle and avoid it the very moment before death.

And now, the obstacle chosen for this dangerous game was—

“Kazuma, Kazuma! It’s coming! The next one is high! This is it this time! Ahhhh, it is going to crash!”

Darkness whose limbs were bounded.

The Hawkite Runners that were charging at Darkness with their heads down...!

Just when you thought they would collide, they will jump just above Darkness with their chest facing the sky like high jumpers.

They would then start running again nonchalantly and move passed me and the other adventurers.

There were more that charges towards Darkness, but they would jump straight up, do splits or even somersault over Darkness the moment before impact.

“Kazuma! Is this part of anxiety play!? Leaving the close shaves aside...! What is going on, the horny males are jumping over me one after another...!”

“Hey shut your mouth, there are other people watching!”

Aqua beside me puffs out her chest with a gleeful expression, as if she was saying ‘praise me’.

“Alright alright, well done. I will trade places with you after this is over.”

When she heard me say that, Aqua clenched her fists and cheered.

I made her cast buffing magic that will improve Darkness’ luck for a period of time, Blessing.

Darkness who was squirming around anxiously had great luck due to the spell, so she won’t be hit for now.

In the mean time, the adventurer escorts made their move.

“Spells! The enemy moves fast, so use spells!”

“In response to these words, the mages started chanting at the same time...!”

“Lightning!”

“Blade of Wind!”

“Fire Ball!”

The spell flew chaotically at the approaching monsters.

The Hawkite hit by the spells maintained their speed despite losing consciousness, tumbling into the carriages and adventurers one after another.

They already reached a certain speed, so taking them out won't stop their body charging forward due to inertia, they couldn't be stopped simply.

The adventurers and carriages collided with the speeding Hawkite, causing serious damages.

The surviving Hawkites that leapt over Darkness did not slow down and turned around.

The merchants and adventurers who saw that was shaken.

What were they planning!

What I saw was— the squirming Darkness that was targeted by the monsters.

... Looking at her, an idea came to my mind.

“Oji-san, is there anything like a cliff around here!?”

I grabbed the driver who was watching blankly and asked him.

I want to use Darkness as bait to lure the monsters and lead them to their death.

By hanging Darkness before a cliff so she won't fall off.

That way, after they jump over Darkness, they will fall off the cliff one after another...!

“No, there are no cliffs around here... Aside from a cavern that provides shelter from sudden rain, there is nothing around here.”

When I heard the Oji-san's answer, I thought that things wouldn't proceed so smoothly—

... Cavern.

“Oji-san, is that cavern nearby!? If it is, let's take the carriage there! Megumin, Aqua, get on!”

I instructed the people beside me and ran towards Darkness.

As I struggled to undo the ropes on Darkness...!

“!? Hey what the hell, there are no knots!? How in the world?!?”

I want to undo the ropes but there are no knots...!

I turned to the man who casted Bind on Darkness.

“Sorry! Once Bind is cast, it can’t be undone before the effect time is over! You can only cut the ropes one by one with something like a knife...!”

Hey, are you kidding me?

I turned back to look at the Hawkite Runners, the leading monster was already heading this way.

There was no time!

“Kazuma! I don’t know what you are planning to do, but don’t mind me, just drag me with you! This rope is tough enough, this is faster than cutting it one at a time! Don’t waste time, this is an emergency!”

“That is true, but I don’t want you who made things a mess to tell me that!”

I dragged the heavy Darkness with me and move towards to the carriage that was ready to move.

“There are Hawkites over there!”

Someone warned us.

At the same time, I heard the sound of consecutive magical explosion.

Ignoring this noise, I tried to board the carriage...

“Hey, what should we do now! You are too heavy, I can’t carry you onto the carriage alone!”

“Don’t, don’t say I am heavy, correction, it is my armor that is heavy! Just tie me to the carriage with a rope and drag me along! It can’t be helped, this is an emergency! Don’t hold back, there is no other way!”

Depravetina argued with anticipation in her eyes.

“Hey, use this rope! Sorry for troubling you!”

The one throwing me the rope was the thief that bound Darkness.

I should be the one apologizing in all sorts of manner for this pervert of ours.

I used the rope I caught to tie Darkness to the carriage...!

“Customer, we have to go now! the carriage will get destroyed!”

I shouted in reply to the anxious voice of the driver Oji-san.

“Alright, let’s go Oji-san! Darkness, tell me if it is too tight! I will undo the rope immediately!”

Darkness who was looking forward to what was going to happen to her squirmed with a blushed face while under bondage, unable to hear what I was saying anymore.

“Ahhh... I am getting dragged by a horse while being bounded by ropes...! And the males that are chasing after me while I am like this...!”

Maybe she will be happier if I just leave her here all tied up.

The carriage started accelerating with Darkness in tow.

“Nah Kazuma, Darkness, she—I know Kazuma is terrible, but this is too much!”

“This... is going too far...”

“No, no! This isn’t my idea, it is Darkness, she...!”

While the two of them were staring at me accusingly after I got on the carriage, the driver yelled hoarsely.

“Customer, what should I do! They are heading this way! They are gaining on us! Where should we go!?”

The driver Oji-san probably wanted to leave us behind, but didn’t do so because he collected the travel fees from us, it must be hard on them.

“To the caverns! The caverns you mentioned just now!”

The carriage moved full frantically while the Hawkite behind inched closer.

They had the speed advantage, oh now, they will...!

“Bottomless Swamp!”

A clear voice sounded out from within the carriage.

At the same time, a large swamp appeared between the Hawkite and the carriage.

The one leading the pack fell in, its legs sinking down.

That was Wiz.

Seeing the carriage was about to be caught, she used magic to hinder their advancement.

However, the monsters went around the swamp and continued chasing us.

The group of Hawkite continued their pursuit, their target Darkness was...!

“Erm ahhh, how, how shameful—I! My armor is clanking loudly! Ahh, my cape is torn, all tattered unlike any nobility...! Don’t, don’t look! Don’t look Kazuma, stop watching my torn and tattered appearance ahhh!”

Darkness’ whose cheeks were flushed kept saying ‘don’t look’, but she seemed so happy.

She will glance our way from time to time, and her face will turn red when she saw everyone’s gazes.

A leopard can’t change its spot.

Even when her body was manipulated, she still asked Megumin to strike her down together with Vanir. Where did my cool and brave comrade disappeared to?

“Heal! Heal!”

Aqua beside me busied herself with casting recovering magic on Darkness who was being dragged.

“Kazuma! I can see the caverns! I am ready to cast my spell any time!”

“Alright, wait for my signal!”

Inside the shaking carriage that was speeding along.

I gave instructions to Megumin while nocking an arrow on my bow...!

“Oji-san, stop the carriage when you see the caverns! Aqua, give me a strength buff spell!... Snipe snipe snipe!”

I stuck my body out of the carriage window and kept shooting at the Hawkite closing in.

All the arrows struck the Hawkites in the head thanks to my skill.

Seeing their own kind fall before them, the Hawkites spread their wings and cawed loudly as they ran!

“Piihyororororororoooo!”

I see Hawkite Runners.

The question of where the Kite element was had been answered and I felt a sense of satisfaction. The driver shouted desperately at this moment.

“Customer, we are before the caverns! No one goes near there unless it is raining, so you can go all out!... I am braking, grab on to something!”

As everyone grabbed on to something, the carriage braked violently besides the cavern entrance.

The Hawkites were right behind us.

Although we stopped, they showed no signs of stopping.

Not only that, they were running even faster after getting attacked.

— Using my strength that was enhanced by Aqua’s buffing, I leapt off the carriage and grab the rope tying Darkness to the carriage. I flung Darkness as if I was performing a hammer throw, tossing her before the entrance of the cavern!

“Ahhh!? Good, such wonderful service! As expected of Kazuma! After dragging me with a horse, you are now throwing me out as bait for the monsters Ugh...!?”

Darkness became quiet after she landed before the cavern entrance.

At the same time...!

“Pihyororororoo”

With their shrill cries, the Hawkite Runners charged at Darkness.

Their heads were almost touching the ground, and jumped away the moment before they will collide with Darkness.

Straddling jump, Fosbury flop, western roll and even scissors jump.

The Hawkite Runners jumped over Darkness like a burst of wind and charged into the cavern.

In no time, the entire flock was inside the cavern. The instant the last one entered the cavern.

“Megumin! Now!”

I tugged the rope connected to Darkness, pulling her as far from the cavern as possible and gave the orders to Megumin who completed chanting her spell.

“Explosion—!!”

After receiving her orders, Megumin cast her devastating explosion spell into the cavern.

A flash of light from the tip of her staff seemed to be chasing after the monsters in the cavern and was sucked into the darkness of the cavern...!

And the knoll was blown up along with the cavern with a boom.

Part 8

Evening, after the sun had completely set.

The caravan people and us lighted several campfires.

The carriages formed a circle around the fire, acting like a barricade.

I heard that such a placement could block the wind and act as a wall against monsters that attacks them.

Although it would take some time for the carriages to start moving again, it is almost impossible to travel by carriage in the dark in case of danger anyway.

Taking that into consideration, this was a reasonable formation.

“Come eat more! Help yourself! This is high quality meat!”

The one offering the well roasted meat of some sort was an Oji-san leading this caravan.

Our excellent performance in defeating the Hawkites during the day made us very popular for some reason.

At this point, I am too afraid to say they were attracted by that crusader of ours.

Hence, I felt a bit guilty, but I still accepted his hospitality, but...

“Speaking of which, that was splendid! To think we have an arch wizard that could use explosion with us...! And an arch priest that could heal so many casualties so easily. And a brave crusader who didn’t take a single step back in the face of the Hawkite Runners and took them all on...! The lady who created a swamp with high level spells in an instant! Finally, your wise judgement to lure the enemies into the cavern to wipe them out! Perfect!”

Just spare me.

The truth wasn’t like that, everything was our fault.

“No no no, that is just a coincidence. Erm... I said it a number of times already, we don’t need the pay out for escort duties...”

“What are you saying, you are the ones that took out most of the Hawkites!”

That’s right. He was talking about giving us salary as escorts.

“No no no, really! I mean it! As adventurers, it is only normal to participate in the fight in that situation! No need! We really can’t accept this!!”

I tried my best to reject his offer.

This was like fixing a match. I am not thick skinned enough to accept the rewards so readily.

But this leader was trembling from gratitude for some reasons.

“... How wonderful people you all are! My eyes had been opened, to think in this tough world there are still real adventurers like you all!”

... And he said that.

To avoid getting exposed, I have better not talk too much with this person.

Aqua went to another bonfire to display her party tricks and conned wine from them.

For unknown reasons, Wiz was dragged along by Aqua.

Darkness who was thrown before the cavern entrance as bait was blown away by the explosion from the entrance and her armor was tattered all over.

She suffered light wounds, but those had already been healed by Aqua.

Right now she was beside me staring intently as her armor was repaired.

The one repairing the armour was me.

I never imagined the crafting skill I learned to invent merchandize was put to use in such a way.

Megumin was watching me repair the armor too.

It was such dull and tedious work, I don’t know why they were watching it with so much interest...

The dented part of the armour requires stripping away the material inside that absorb impact away, and then knocking it from the inside to flatten it. After that, the scratches will be removed with sandpaper.

Finally, the impact absorption material will be sewn back in...

“It is hard to do this when you all stare at me like that...”

Megumin replied:

“No, I think you are repairing it perfectly. I think you can make a living as a blacksmith.”

“... Hmmm, it feels great seeing my armor being fixed right before my eyes.”

Continuing after Megumin said with her eyes sparkling.

— There were more than ten carriages and the caravan had plenty of people too.

Several dozen people camping under the stars and chatting around the fire, a scene straight out of a fantasy world.

The bonfire Aqua was mingling in was suddenly in an uproar.

I looked over there curiously, she seemed to be showing some of her best tricks.

Aqua was being treated like a guest of honor—

“One more time! Aqua-sama, please do it again once more!”

“If you want money I will pay! Please perform it once more!”

The people in the caravan kept saying that.

Can't this girl just make a living out of that?

The people in this caravan seemed to have come from a faraway city to do business here.

... I understand it now. They didn't know about our infamous members.

If the town folks who knew us well learn about this incident, they will be probably say ‘so you guys stirred up trouble again’.

... I felt like sleeping.

We were not escorts, so we did not have watch duties.

I told them I was about to retire for the night.

“... Alright. Sleeping is fine, but please be ready to get up at any moment.”

I don't know why, but Megumin was smiling deviously as she said that.

— Late into the night.

I woke up after hearing some sound.

Someone was on watch, but they didn't seem to notice this sound.

Looking to the side, I saw my comrades sleeping before the fireplace.

I don't see Aqua and Darkness, but Megumin and Wiz were still sleeping.

I had a bad feeling about this.

Faint noises could be heard from beyond the carriages that were acting as a barricade.

It would be better to wake everyone up.

“Hey, get up Megumin. Wiz too, something seems off.”

I shook Megumin's shoulders.

But Megumin was drooling and sleeping soundly.

“... Hey. Megumin, Wiz, wake up. If you don't get up, I will do something that will make you too embarrassed to see my face for several days. I don't mind and won't be troubled if you don't get up. But with the excuse of waking you up, I won't hold back. Can you don't get up? Alright?”

“How can it be alright. What are you planning to do!”

“Uwahhh!”

I jumped because of the sound that came from behind me.

My heart almost came out from my mouth!

“Hey Darkness, don’t scare me like that. Tell me if you are awake. Any later and you will witness something incredible happening before you.

Darkness who was supposed to be sleeping near me just like Megumin said:

“... So you really were planning to do something. No, putting that aside...”

Darkness lowered her voice and watched the surrounding guardedly.

Right now she looked just like a decent adventurer, that indecent crusader I saw during the day was nowhere to be found.

... Oh?

I sense something. My enemy detection skill is tingling.

The person on watch is that thief like adventurer with us during the day.

His enemy detection skill was probably triggered too and he shouted.

“Hey, something is coming! Everyone get up!”

When they heard his voice or the adventurers and the caravan party got up in a shock.

Using my farsight skill, I surveyed the carriages in the dark and found numerous squirming figures.

... What was that, people? But their movement was too stiff for humans.

“Hey, there are lots of them! They are humanoid in shape but moves too slow!”

The people who heard me shouting lighted the tip of their torch with the bonfire to illuminate the outside of the carriages.

The thing squirming under the shine of the torches were...

With rotting flesh that give you goosebumps—

— We could tell with a glance they were the mob undead monster, zombie-san.

“Wahhhh” x3

When they saw the impactful scene through the light of the torches, everybody screamed... including me.

Darkness who took off her armor picked up the great sword beside her and stood up.

I handed Megumin who was still sleeping without a care in the world to Darkness and said.

“Take care of her! I will get Aqua here, this is her stage to shine now!”

Let us quietly pay back the debt we owed the caravan during the day.

A lot of people were hurt because of the Hawkite Darkness attracted and the carriages were damaged too.

I was too timid to tell them the incident earlier was our fault, so let's use this chance to clear the slate.

I looked for Aqua and searched around the area...!

“Wahhhh! What is happening!? Why am I surrounded by undead just when I wake up!? Kazuma-san! Kazuma-sama!!”

I looked towards the source of the voice and saw Aqua who was leaning against the carriage being surrounded by zombies.

Hmm... Hey wait, could it be...

“Attacking while I am sleeping, how dare you undead! Lost souls, please rest in peace— Turn Undead!”

With Aqua's shout, a warm white light spread out.

The people around us were in an uproar when they saw that.

When they were touched by the light emitted by Aqua, the zombie crowd was purified and disappeared...

The ones who witnessed this scene erupted in cheers.

But seeing this scene filled my heart with a certain emotion.

— Guilt.

“Ah fu hahaha, count yourself unlucky to have shown up while this lady is here! I will purify all of you from head to toe!”

With her head high, chest out and illuminated by the bonfire, she looked like a goddess guiding lost souls back to heaven.

I muttered while I watched.

“... So, sorry...”

Seeing Aqua continuing to purify the zombies, the crowd was certain of victory and praised Aqua.

“What a beautiful priest...! She is just like a goddess!!”

“Ahh, the zombies are being purified one by one...! This lady is the comrade of the crusader who protected us during the day...!”

I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

All my comrades were so regrettable.

“It is rare for zombies to attack, but it is great that arch priest-sama is here!”

I apologize, if that goddess of ours wasn't here, there probably won't be any zombies congregating here.

“Easy peasy~ how is that Kazuma? I am a model goddess! I have been actively performing during this trip right? It’s about time you give me an offering or two!”

It couldn’t be helped since her body type attracts the undead, but I still felt like beating up that girl who was getting so close to me with an arrogant face.

“Ahhh!! Be strong Wiz! Someone, Wiz, she...!”

I think I hear the panicking voice of Darkness. But at this moment, the leader of the caravan came before me and Aqua.

“Ara, you saved us again! I must give you all a reward this time!”

I apologize, but I definitely couldn’t accept!

ようこそ!!



Sightseeing in this pain in the ass city!

Part 1

“Well then, please enjoy your vacation in the city of Hot Springs! Thank you everyone, you have been a great help!”

The leader of the caravan kept nodding and bowing to us.

The city of water and Hot Spring, Alcanretia.

After our long journey inside the carriage, we finally arrived here.

Even after telling the leader the truth behind the series of monster attacks, he refused to believe me.

He seemed to think that this was a story we made up in order to refuse his payment.

To reward us in lieu of monetary payment, he gave us five hotel coupons.

He seemed to be the owner of the largest hotel in Alcanretia.

His plan was to head to the next city without stopping.

“”Ahhh... Jarippa... Jarippa is leaving...”

As Megumin saw the carriage off, she mumbled to herself.

There were many adventurers who alighted at this stop along with us. They had already entered the city as Megumin continued to see the carriage leave completely out of sight.

“What is Jarippa?”

Aqua understood it suddenly.

“Could it be that baby dragon? Speaking of which, one of the customer that looked rather rich came to Megumin the arch wizard who helped them a lot to name this dragon.”

... Asking a Magic Crimson race to name that dragon.

“I heard that after a dragon is named, it will ignore any other name it is given...”

Darkness blurted out this important fact out of the blue.

Megumin nodded and was filled with emotions.

That child seemed satisfied with the name Jarippa. I left the note with the dragon’s name on it, I hope the owner will cherish it dearly.”

This girl, what has she done.

My beloved sword was given a weird name which hurt me deeply too. I empathize with the owner deeply...

“Can’t you change your hobby of giving things weird names? It is about time you Crimson Magic race understand how weird your naming sense is.”

“I fully understand Kazuma has no naming sense at all. Such a pity since Kazuma already has a nice name. If Kazuma has children in the future, let me name them.”

“I will never let you get your way... Wait, what did you say about my name? Is Kazuma a good name to the Crimson Magic race? Hey, that makes me depressed.”

With Wiz on my back, I looked around the city.

Wiz was hit by a Turn Undead casted by some moron and had yet to recover consciousness.

And that moron was shouting excitedly right now.

“We are finally here! The city of water and Hot Spring Alcanretia!”

— City of water and Hot Spring Alcanretia.

Lying between the clear lakes and the mountain where the Hot Springs was situated, it was a city surrounded by water.

All the buildings had the base colour of blue, making it look clean and beautiful, full of vigour and life.

The demon king army was rampaging around the world, but it didn't affect this place at all.

It was said the minions of the demon king army fought in this place before. But after that battle, the demon king army no longer dare to get close to this place.

Some people say that there were too many priests in this city. For the demon king army, waging war against priests were too difficult.

Others say this city was protected by the goddess of water Aqua.

— There was another saying.

“Welcome to Alcanretia! Are you here for sightseeing? To join the cult? To adventure? For baptism? If you are looking for a job, please come to the Axis cult! We have an opening right now to explain how wonderful the Axis cult are, the remunerations are very attractive. If you take this job, you will get the privilege of calling yourself an Axis cultist! Come come come, join us!”

— As this city had lots of Axis cultist, the demon king army don't want anything to do with them.

The moment we arrive in this city, we were swarmed by a group that seemed to be Axis cultist.

What should we do, I didn't expect them to make their recruitment pitch suddenly.

And why did this city has so many Axis cultists?

“What beautiful blue hair! Are you born this way? How enviable! I am so envious of you! This hagaromo looks like the one Aqua-sama wears, it suits you well too”

When I realized it, Aqua was being welcomed passionately by a female cultist.

... Hey, this is bad.

If she said ‘actually, I am the goddess herself!’ as usual, she will be treated as a hoax and get beaten up by that bunch.

Megumin and Darkness was intimidated by them and was acting timidly.

Wiz was sleeping on my back, which was lucky for her.

Only Aqua was happily mingling with the crowd with both eyes shining, happy about the female cultist praising her looks.

I walked to her side and said softly:

“Hey, don’t tell them you are the real goddess of water. It will definitely get us into big trouble. And don’t use your real name, use an alias.”

“I know that Kazuma, I’m not a dummy. Let’s go tour around! This is the city of water and Hot Spring Alcanretia! As the goddess of water, I am very excited! Most importantly, this is the main base of the Axis Cult!”

“!?”

So this was the rumoured base camp of the cult full of weirdoes?

The Axis Cult is an organization— that worships the goddess Aqua.

No wonder she wants to come here so much.

We couldn’t leave the hyped Aqua alone, I had no choice but to bow to the Axis Cultist welcoming us and say:

“Sorry, we already have a priest from the Axis Cult. We are here for sightseeing, see you...”

We turn and leave after that. The Axis Cultist waved behind us with all smiles.

“Is that so! Then farewell comrades! May you have a wonderful day!”

After we finally got out of the encirclement of the Axis Cultist, Megumin and Darkness sighed in relief.

How should I put this...

“Welcome to Alcanretia! After joining the Axis Cult, many believers were cured of their illness, strike the lottery and became skilled in their artistic talents! What do you think, want to join us?”

... What a suspicious religious organization.

I looked at the cultist pitching passionately with an indescribable feeling. It seemed that everyone was avoiding them on the streets.

“... An, anyway, let’s head to the hotel. I feel a bit guilty about this, but since we got the coupons, it will be a waste not to use it.”

After I said that, Aqua smiled mischievously.

“Please go on ahead everyone! I will go to the headquarters as an arch priest and receive their worship!”

She said something really unsettling.

You should be looking after Wiz!

“... Kazuma, I am a bit worried about Aqua, so I will accompany her. Can you help us bring our luggage to the hotel?”

Megumin looked worriedly at the excited Aqua.

Indeed, we will be dragged into some troublesome matters again if we leave her alone.

Leaving the supervision of Aqua to Megumin, I headed to the hotel with the others.

Part 2

“Welcome! The master had already informed us about your visit! Please enjoy your stay!”

When we reached the hotel indicated on the coupon, we received a warm welcome.

However, that caravan was attacked by monsters because of us, so my conscience was aching.

As expected of the largest hotel in the city, it looked really big.

Such lodgings were usually reserved for nobles.

When I heard it was a Hot Spring hotel, I thought it would be Japanese style, I didn't expect it to be western style.

There seemed to be a top class Hot Spring within this hotel.

The hotel staff received us warmly and carried our luggage to our rooms.

Laying Wiz to rest in a room, I put away the heavy equipment and luggage and immediately went into sightseeing mode. This was the first time I was visiting a city aside from Axel after all.

We asked the hotel staff to tell her we went out to play if Wiz wakes up.

We were a bit worried, but doing so won't make her wake up any earlier.

The main event would have to wait until evening— when everyone was gathered.

“What about you Darkness? Since we are here on vacation, I plan to go sightseeing and come back around dinner time.”

“Yeah, I will go too. I don't know cities other than Axel well.”

Darkness who was in casual wear smiled.

After putting down my luggage, I decided to tour the city with Darkness.

— As expected of a tourist city, the shops were exceptionally passionate about touting customers.

Or rather, it was like a war zone.

After glancing at a shop, someone talk to us suddenly.

“Customer, people will doubt your taste if you make purchases in such a cheap shop. Here, this is Arcane buns made from all natural ingredients by the elves, it matches your high class status, try a sample.”

The voice came from...

A handsome man with long ears, green hair and white skin.

That's right it was an elf.

"Hey, don't be cocky, jerk! Things that are expensive might not be good! Customer, try my special dwarf meat bun. It is full of meat and will remain edible for a long time, a specialty that gives good value for money!"

The one rebuking the elf angrily was the shopkeeper staring at me.

His height only reached my chest level, but he was well developed sideways and had a face full of beard.

What a classic dwarf.

"Elf...! And dwarf...! Hey Kazuma, there are elves and dwarves here! They look just like the way I heard in stories when I was little."

"Ohhh, indeed, the elves are handsome and the dwarves are stubborn."

Darkness shouted like a kid in Disneyland, and I replied to her.

Aside from the fact they are displaying items for sale here, they were the most fantasy like existence I have seen since coming to this alternate world.

The elegant and handsome elves.

Dwarves were crude in speech, stubborn in nature and had a thick beard.

Seeing the two shop owners moved me a little.

I had seen elves and dwarves from afar before, but this was the first time I was talking to them up close.

I switched my gaze between them with sparkling eyes. However, the pure admiration for the alternate world was misunderstood by them.

"Look what you did, the customer is confused. He is just here to look around, but is now at a lost because you pressured him. Back off, lowly dwarf."

"Stop your bullshit! The customer wants to browse my wares, he is troubled because you are bothering him! He wants to buy my goods, so scram, pale green elf!"

I panicked when the two of them started quarreling.

Speaking of which, I heard the relationship between elves and dwarves had always been bad.

"Hey, don't fight! Erm, I will buy from both shops, so it is fine!"

When they heard what I said, the two of them stopped squabbling and said to me with a smile.

"Thank you for your patronage!" x2

"— Kazuma, the relationships between elves and dwarves are really bad! Just like the book my father gave me to read when I was young!"

After leaving the local specialty stores, I listen to Darkness talking with excitement in her eyes.

Although I was forced to buy something, but I saw something nice as compensation.

Darkness was carrying a lot of bags and looked really happy. This felt obviously like high pressure sales.

She seemed to be planning to distribute these to his father and the servants.

She had probably never been away from the city before, so she wanted to buy something back.

“Yup, they give off the feeling of being ‘real elves and dwarves’... Ara, I forgot to ask them what fun place we can visit when I bought these stuff.”

We didn’t know anything about this city and didn’t have any place we want to visit particularly.

I asked Darkness to wait for me right here and returned to the shops by myself.

However, I didn’t saw these two shop owners.

Maybe their shift was over and they were resting?

Hearing voices from the depth of the shop, I peeked in.

There was no doubt that this was the voice of the elf just now.

... Hey, wait, I hear the voice of the dwarf too.

Could it be...!?

“Hey you two, don’t fight—!”

I charged in thinking they were quarreling inside the shop...!

“Ah, customer, this is the staff break room, non staff can’t come in.”

The elf said to me lazily, his respectful tone nowhere to be found.

... No, elf... Elf...?

He probably noticed my gaze, so the elf(?) owner tugged his ears and said:

“Oh, this— Let me be clear, I am a real elf, not a fake.”

Simply put, his ears— was round.

It was indistinguishable from humans.

He sat cross legged besides the dwarf, a pair of fake ears on his lap.

... By the way, the dwarf also took off his fake beard and was scratching his chin.

“... Eh, what is going on here?”

I didn't know what to say. The elf(?) and dwarf(?) looked at each other.

"Ara, well, elves in the forest don't live together with humans and so their ears are long. For elves like me who live among humans, there would be inter racial children over time. So our ears gradually become rounder. But if I say I am an elf before the customers, the customers might be surprised or disappointed since it differs from what their impression was. That is why I dressed up like a pure blooded elf."

The elf said.

... What the hell. And I was quite disappointed just now.

Following that, the dwarf continued:

"As for me, having a beard will cause hygiene problems. And I only work in the shop until evening. I have to prepare meals for the hotel guest in the morning and evening. It will be terrible if the customers complain about finding beard hair in their meal... Ah, are you thinking that we might still be quarreling? Sorry, that fight was a performance we put on every day. After all, the rumour says that dwarves and elves hate each other, so we made use of that..."

This was like visiting Africa and seeing the natives holding spears, and discovering them playing with mobile phones when as we are about to leave.

It was dumb of me to look for the feeling of fantasy in this world.

The two of them looked at the depressed me with apologetic eyes.

"Ah... Sorry about that, did we broke your dreams and imagination?"

"Customer, thinking too much is not good for your health. There are definitely clumsy dwarves and elves poor in bowmanship in this world."

"Hey hey, are you referring to me?"

The two of them laughed.

... This world was too damn evil.

It couldn't be help if the illusion was seen through, rather than that, more importantly—

"Forget it, I won't ask for a refund or anything. Can you tell me about the fun place to visit? I am here to ask that."

Both of them looked at each other.

"Sightseeing spot... Eh, there was a wonderful Hot Spring earlier..."

"Yup, it would be great if customer came earlier..."

"...? I thought there are Hot Springs everywhere, this is the city of Hot Springs after all."

After hearing my query, the elf wagged his finger.

"I am talking about the mixed gender Hot Springs popular among the young ladies."

"Are you for real?"

I leaned forward. The dwarf added:

“Of course it’s true. We will enjoy ourselves there after work every day.”

... What a wonderful Hot Springs, why couldn’t it be visited now?

Noticing my question, the elf answered.

“Actually the water quality of the Hot Springs everywhere is dropping.”

... The water quality is dropping?

“That is so, some of the customers even fell sick and develop rashes after going to the Hot Spring... Some even fainted. Experts had already been hired to investigate why the quality of the Hot Spring water was turning bad, but it is still unclear...”

... I looked at the frowning dwarf.

And had the ominous feeling that I might get dragged into something troublesome.

“— How was it? Any good place to visit?”

When I returned to Darkness, I remembered the reason why I returned to the shop in the first place.

I forgot my original objective after hearing about the mixed gender Hot Spring.

“An, anyway, let’s tour around there.”

I suggested while Darkness tilted her head in confusion.

Part 3

— Holding the kebabs I bought from the street stall, I walked around aimlessly with Darkness and gawked at the scenery.

The city was clean and surrounded by water.

Judging from this point alone, this seemed to be a great city to live in.

... Suddenly, a young girl carrying something heavy appeared before me.

I unconsciously gave way to her, planning to go pass her from the side when—

“Ara!? What should I do, the apples I bought...!”

The moment I passed by her, the lady suddenly loses balance, spilling all her groceries out.

She picked up the apples on the ground and stuffed it into the bag.

Darkness and I helped her to pick up the drop items...

“Thank you very much! You have been a great help! Can both of you allow me to repay your kindness...?”

The girl casually tossed her groceries she cherished so strongly and held my hand.

Eh, could it be that kind of flag...!

As I was hoping for teen romance sort of development, she said—

“There is a cafe set up by the Axis cult ahead, want to head there and chat with me?”

“... Forget it.”

The girl grabbed my cloak as I turned to leave with Darkness.

“Don’t need to hurry, I might look like this, but I am actually great at fortune telling. Let me tell your fortune to repay you.”

“No, no need... I am good, let... let go!”

The moment I shook the hand on my cloak off, the girl tackled my waist.

“The fortune telling results are out! Misfortune will befall you if you continue like this! However, you can avoid misfortune by joining the Axis cult! Come join us! How can you not join!?”

“I am already meeting with misfortune right now! Let me go! Help me Darkness!”

Darkness grabbed the hand of the girl on my waist.

And pulled out a small amulet from her chest.

That should be the amulet of Eris devotees.

Maybe it was the same as the cross of Christians in the old world.

“Sorry, I belong to the Eris cult, please stop coercing this man.”

“Pui!”

The girl spitted to the side of the road.

She quietly released her hand, took her shopping bags and left in a puff.

The sheltered lady who had never been treated so rudely stood there stiffly. That girl turned back after taking two steps and—

“... Pui!”

She spit at the side of the road once again and walked away angrily.

Hey...

“Hey Darkness, erm, how should I put this, the Axis cult and Eris religion seemed to be on bad terms, so keep that amulet... And, don’t take this matter too hard...”

I consoled Darkness who just stood there stiffly.

“... Ugh...”

Darkness groaned softly and trembled.

.....

“... Could it be, you are a masochist?”

“... No.”

— As we walked along the deserted street, a menacing looking man and a frail girl appeared before us.

“Hyaa! Save me! The two people over there, please help me. This man who is probably an Eris devotee wants to drag me to a deserted corner...!”

“Hehehe, do you happen to be an Axis cultist? Haha! If I see a strong and handsome Axis cultist, I would definitely run away. Since you are not, I will proceed unhesitantly! If you want to stop me who had been blessed by the dark goddess Eris, you will regret it!”

“Ahh, why is this happening to me! If someone sign on the blank cult entry form, this evil Eris devotee will run away—!”

.....

I pretended to not see anything and was about to pull Darkness to leave with me...

“Ahh, are the two of you leaving me to die! It will be fine, just sign here and you will receive special powers from Aqua-sama, and become powerful and cool! The Eris devotees will run in fear from this power!”

“That’s right! And after joining the cult you will gain incredible abilities like ‘art and craft master’ and ‘attract undead monsters easily’!”

Darkness took out her amulet before these two.

“As you see, I am a follower of Eris. Defaming Eris-sama as a dark goddess before me is—”

“Pui!” x2

Before Darkness even finished, the girl and man spit on the roadside and left together.

... Was there anyone decent in the Axis cult?

Darkness stood wordlessly in place and trembled again.

... Were all Eris devotees just like this girl?

— After that.

“Congratulations! You are the one million person to pass through this street! Allow me to present you with a memento! This memento is sponsored by the Axis Cult! In order to collect this memento, you have to join the cult as a formality— you just need to write it on paper, would that be fine?”

I pulled Darkness with me and was about to go back from the way we came.

“... Hmm? Hmmmmm? Long time no see! It’s me it’s me! How have you been? I was in the same class back in school, don’t you remember? I changed a lot after joining the Axis cult, no wonder you can’t recognize me~”

I have never been to school in this world, and never been close to any woman, so I silently walk pass her.

“... What is with this city, or rather— What is wrong with the Axis cult.”

Tired after being tortured by the Axis cultist, Darkness and I rested in an open air cafe.

Due to the Eris amulet on her neck, Darkness was treated terribly. Right now, her face was still red.

While I laid on the table to rest, the server brought the items we ordered to us.

She placed the drinks on our table one by one.

I propped myself up and prepare myself to eat...

“Ah, Eris devotee customer, this is the special service from this shop.”

The server who brought us the stuff placed something by Darkness’ feet.

... It was dog food served in a plate.

“Please enjoy yourself!”

The waitress gave a perfect professional smile and left elegantly.

Darkness’ cheeks turned red and she kept on shivering.

“... Nah, Kazuma, let’s stay in this city forever.”

“... No chance.”

After finishing our meal, I dragged Darkness who was blushing with a blushed face to return to the hotel.

How should I put it, this city is too weird.

... As we were on our way to return, a young girl ran towards us in a hurry.

She was about ten years old.

She fell in front of us.

Darkness and I rushed to her in a hurry. She struggled and said while resisting the pain—

“Ah... Thank you, onii-san, onee-san...”

— She smiled weakly.

My tortured soul was healed by her smile.

“Are you okay? Be careful next time, can you stand?”

I offered a hand to the little girl as I spoke. The girl grabbed my hand happily.

Her smile was so pure. Ah, how healing.

“Uhhh, I am fine! Thank you! ... Nah, kind onii-san, can you tell me your name?”

“Kazuma, Satou Kazuma, this scary looking onee-san here is Darkness.”

Darkness used her hands to poke my temples immediately.

After hearing my name, the little girl took out pen and paper.

“Sa tu Ka za mah? How is it spelled? Please write it down for me onii-san.”

“Okay, my name is...”

As I was going to write my name down, I saw the header on that piece of paper.

‘Axis Cult entry form’.

“Fuck you!”

“Onii-san—!!”

I tore that piece of paper in half.

Part 4

Axis cult.

Hidden in the shadow of the national religion, it has a poor reputation everywhere aside from this city.

But their presence was really strong. I heard that if you meet robbers while traveling, just claiming to be from the Axis cult will make them run away.

That was how feared Axis cultist was.

It was said that even the demon king army was afraid of them.

— Right now I am...

“Hey! Get me the person-in-charge! I will teach you all a lesson!”

I charged into the church headquarters of the Axis cult with a roar.

“Ara, how may I help you? Joining us? Baptism? Or... Do. It. With. Me?”

Inside the church was a female cultist that was sweeping the floor.

There was no one else around except for her.

“Do, do what...”

“Don’t be shy, I am just kidding. Why would a girl you just met say that, is there something wrong with your head?”

What should I do, I felt like giving her a punch.

“How may I assist you? The leading priest Zesta-sama and the other cultist are busy playing around under the guise of spreading the cult... No, they are busy spreading the holy name of Aqua-sama. If you are looking for them, please come another day...”

“Hey, you said something incredible just now, you are causing so much trouble just to have fun!?... Forget that for now, did you happen to see a girl mage with an eye patch and an arch priest with blue hair? They are my team mates.”

The female cultist said as she continued sweeping.

“Ara, so you are a team mate of that great person. Your two teammates are inside.”

Inside? What are the two of them doing in a place like this?

The female cultist tilted her head and said.

“By the way, your comrade there... The kids are throwing stones at her, will it be fine to leave her like this?”

“Hmm? ... Ah! Hey brats! What are you doing! Shoo, go away!”

Darkness was sitting down at the entrance of the church with her head in her arms. The children were throwing rocks at her.

I chased the kids away in a hurry.

“Ka, Kazuma... I think this city is the best... Everyone, even the women and children glares at me as if I am an enemy...! I am going to lose...!”

“Sigh, you better don’t wander around on the streets, so troublesome. And keep that Eris amulet away.”

“I refuse.”

I dragged the Eris devotees that won’t listen to my advice and enter the church again.

The female cultist gestured to a small room in the church with her eyes.

It was a small house in a corner of the church.

I see, so that was the so called confession room?

“One of your teammates is in there. All the priests in the church are out right now, so this arch-priest is covering for them, and hearing confessions.”

A real goddess listening confessions, I have never heard something like that before.

“Kazuma, I will search for Megumin, I will leave Aqua to you.”

Darkness ventured into the depths of the church after saying that.

... The moment Darkness passed by the female cultist sweeping the floor, the cultist swept all the trash she had gathered onto Darkness.

Darkness stopped as she stepped on the dust and trash with a blushed face.

“Ara, I beg your pardon. I saw the Eris amulet and thought it was trash, sorry about that.”

“... No, no it’s fine...”

Darkness kept trembling as if she was enduring something as she squeezed out a sentence. The Eris devotee who was really sick wandered into the depths of the church.

Seeing her figure disappear into the distance, I hurried into the confession room. I really don't want anything to do with the cultist anymore.

The door to the confession room was locked and I couldn't go in.

There was no answer even when I knocked.

Was she sleeping?

I had no choice but to enter the space where the one making the confession was suppose to be in.

The moment I went in, what I heard was—

“Welcome, lost sheep... Come, confess your sins, the goddess will listen to you and grant you compassion...”

Taken in by the atmosphere in the confession room, Aqua was acting in character.

She seemed to like this job after hearing a few confessions.

I couldn't see her face because of the screen, but I could imagine her excited face easily.

“Sheep your head, it's me it's me! Hey, what is up with this city, it makes my head hurts. I can't even sightsee properly. Aren't they your believers, can't you do something about this?”

After hearing what I said, Aqua turned silent for a moment...

“... I see, this is the 'it's me it's me' scam... Please repent seriously and deeply, the merciful lady Aqua will definitely forgive your sins...”

“Hey, I already said it's me, why are you still telling me nonsense. You must be really happy right? You can finally work like a priest.”

When I said that, Aqua was quiet for a short while.

“Do you have anything else to confess? If not, please leave this room, and live on happily...”

“Hey have you played enough, listen to me! Aren't you one of those arch priests that this city worships? The problem will be solved if you give the word, ask them to buck up!”

And Aqua quieten down again...

“I think you have nothing else to confess... Well then, I will wait for the next sheep to come... Please leave.”

“Hey, what are you talking about...! You are chasing me out...”

“I said leave! If your confession is done, then get the hell out!”

This scumbag, hearing the thanks made her so happy that she turned cocky.

Why was she so easily influenced by external factors?

.....

I sat on the chair once again, made a deeply repentant face and said:

“... Actually, I have something I have to tell you, priest-sama.”

“!? I will listen, I will listen! Here here, I will share your confession, so repent! Are you interested in the underwear of your crusader teammate? Or the urge to plunge your nose into your mage companion’s black hair and sniff hard? Or the sins of treating your beautiful and elegant priest comrade so crudely, even though you are just a hikikomori?”

I said clearly to the excited Aqua.

“Actually, I accidentally broke the glass my priest teammates used for party tricks. I repaired it with rice and put it back secretly.”

“!?”

“... Also, she looked so happy when she got her hands on good rare wines, so I wondered just how nice they were, so I wanted to try a little... But it was too tasty, so I finished it all. I know she can’t appreciate wine, so I filled the empty wine bottles with cheap wine.”

“!? What are you saying Kazuma, what is all this about!?”

My confession continued.

“... That priest caused me too much trouble... So before I came to this city, I secretly posted a request in the adventurer's guild to look for a new priest of the Eris cult.”

“Wahhh! You renegade, taste my holy wrath!”

Aqua opened the screen in the confession room and pounced on me—!

“— Really, calm down. I was just joking. Anyway, Darkness and I got a headache dealing with these cultist, and can’t tour around in peace. They are your devotees right, so rein them in.”

Aqua retreated back to the other side of the confession room.

After finally calming the crying Aqua down, I stayed together with Aqua in that room.

“It can’t be helped, this is the first time I am facing my believers face to face... Anyway, you are lying about sourcing for a new priest right?”

“Leaving the first two aside, the last one is a lie, so don’t worry.”

“Hey hold it, did you just say ‘leave the first two aside’?”

... Suddenly, there was knocking on the door to the confession room.

Hey, are you kidding me, someone was here for a confession.

The door opened with a creak, and the sound of someone entering the room on the other side could be heard.

I poked Aqua who was sitting on the floor, then pointed to the floor, and then myself.

“Is it fine for me to be here?”

That's what my gesture meant. Aqua had a serious face, crossing her finger and gesturing at the screen as if she was saying 'look over there'.

Before my eyes—the fingers formed a shadow because of the light. I knew what that was with a glance, that moving shadow was the Destroyer...!

Ah! This idiot, she didn't understand what I meant!

"Welcome, lost sheep... Come, confess your sins, the goddess will listen to you and grant you forgiveness..."

As I was about to leave the room, Aqua who was satisfied after showing me her shadow play calmly announced to the person who came for a confession.

Hey...!

"Ahhh.... Please, please hear my confession! I had been in the Axis cult for a very long time, and worship Aqua-sama resolutely. But...! The drawing of goddess Eris, that bountiful breast... they are enticing me! Those are the breast of the devil! Ahhh... Please, please forgive me for the sin of lusting over another goddess...!"

Don't run here for a confession whenever you run into a boring problem— That thought welled up in me, and I had the urge to charged into the room next door to beat that guy up, what should I do?

However, Aqua kept a straight face and said gently.

"Do not worry, the goddess will forgive all your sins— Thou, give in to your love to big breast, thou, give in to your love to small breast. The Axis cult is a cult that accepts everything. Be it homosexuals, animal ears lovers, lolicon, NEET, undead or succubus. If there is love and is not a crime, the goddess will grant compassion to all."

I felt Aqua glancing towards me when she said NEET.

"Ohh.... Ahhhh..."

The voice of the person confessing was trembling with emotion.

From this voice, he was probably about to cry.

"Thou sincere cultist, I will bestow you with a holy incantation that will spare you from the clutches of the devil. 'Eris stuffs her breast with pads'— Whenever you feel lost again, just repeat this incantation. If you see someone troubled like you, do tell them this too."

"Eris stuffs her breasts with pads... It, it is as if I made it through a bottleneck! Thank you for your wonderful incantation, thank you very much!"

The person who came for a confession left while thanking Aqua profusely.

"... Hey Aqua, you are slandering your junior, is that really adequate for a goddess?"

"What are you talking about? For a goddess, the beliefs from the devotees are very important. It will directly affect the power of the goddess. Eris has a lot of devotees, while my believers are fewer in numbers but stronger in their belief. I am willing to do anything to protect my precious cultists."

You, you...

— When we exited from the confession room, Darkness brought the worn out Megumin to us.

“Kazuma... You are finally here...”

“Hey, what happened, you look really pale.”

Megumin shook her head gently.

“This is like the home of the demons, let us leave right now, I want to get away as soon as possible.”

“What, what in the world happened?”

I was really concerned and kept asking, but she was unwilling to answer.

However, from the huge amount of cult entry forms stuff into all her pockets and gaps between her clothes, everything was clear.

“Are you going back already, Arch priest-sama? Want to visit the Hot Spring reserved for our cultist? This is the main source of income for the Axis cult, the best Hot Spring in the city, using it will improve your health.”

The lone female cultist watching over the church tried to persuade Aqua who was going back with us to stay.

“Ara, that’s a great idea, what do everybody think, want to go together?”

“I want to return to the hotel and rest... And for some reason, Chomusuke is very afraid of this church. Could it be this child hates churches?”

“I’m going back too. There is no telling what troubles there will be when the other Axis cultist returns. Let’s go back, I have enough for today.”

After Megumin and Darkness express their thoughts, they looked at me who had not spoken yet.

They were asking for my opinion.

“Is there a mix bath here?”

“You will receive divine retribution for saying something so despicable in a holy church.”

... After hearing what the female cultist said, I decided to return for the day.

Part 5

Back in the hotel, we found the revived Wiz relaxing her warm body.

“Ah, welcome back everyone! Sorry for making everyone worry. I already bath. The staff told me where the mixed bath was, it is much wider there. And there was no one at all, as if I had booked the whole place for myself.”

... The mixed bath was wider?

... Hmm, her body was still emitting heat, and she said she just bathed, so that means—

Wait, now that I thought about it, if Aqua didn’t pull that confession stunt, I would already had...!

AN
COINCIDENTAL
MEETING
IN THE
MIXED
BATH—

KYA...!

KAZUMA-SAN...?

SOR,
SORRY!

NO, IT'S
FINE...

THEN, I
WILL...

IT'S FINE
SINCE
THIS IS A
MIXED
BATH...!

SILENCE...

.....
ERM...

THIS IS
A RARE
CHANCE,

HOW ABOUT
LETTING ME
WASH YOUR
BACK—

KYAH, YOU
GOT IT
WRONG!

I MEAN ME
WASHING
YOUR BACK—!

EH!?

NO, THAT'S
NOT IT...

**LEAVE IT
TO ME!**

I GUARANTEE
THAT I WILL
SCRUB YOU
NICE AND
CLEAN!

“So, did anyone had fun sightseeing... Kazuma-san, what is the matter?”

“Ahhhh, ten minutes, at least five minutes earlier... No no no I didn't say anything!?... Eh, nothing happened during sightseeing today... I don't want to leave the hotel tomorrow, this city is weird.”

“The Axis cultists are too scary. I understand now why people say they are as scary as the Crimson Magic race.”

Megumin and I said tiredly. But Darkness—

“I, I... plan to tour around tomorrow too...”

“You, you really... Sigh, do what you want, I am going to take a bath.”

I had no words for Darkness who wanted to walk around the streets by herself, stood up, and prepared to go to the bath.

I needed to return to my room to get my underwear.

As I was the only man in the team, I had to stay in a separate room from them.

“... I am going to bath now.”

“I heard you, take your time.”

“I already bathed, please take your time Kazuma-san.”

Megumin and Wiz replied.

I looked at Darkness and said once more—

“... I am going to b—”

“Go.”

Darkness said coldly.

— After leaving their room, I took my underwear and came to the hotel's Hot Spring.

It was a bit lonely since no one came with me, but I expected it from the beginning.

That's right, the main event for today was only beginning.

There were three entrances before me.

From right to left were the men, mixed and female Hot Spring.

I chose the middle entrance by instinct without any hesitation.

Since this was a mixed bath, I didn't need to feel shy and just head right in.

When I entered, I saw a basket with clothes inside.

Which meant there was someone in there.

Calm down, I need to calm down. It was uncertain the one inside was a woman

I forced myself to cool down, took off my clothes with my heart beating first and entered the mixed bath.

... At this moment, I heard someone talking from the mixed bath.

“That damn cult is finally going to be destroyed. The work in destroying the secret Hot Spring is complete, the progress in the other Hot Springs are also proceeding smoothly. Now, we just need to wait. For us who have long lifespan, waiting a decade and two is no big deal.”

The classic antagonist speech of a man plotting some schemes could be heard—

These lines could often be heard in movies and mangas.

Part 6

He just said ‘that damn cult is finally going to be destroyed’.

Probably referring to the Axis cult.

He then said:

‘For us who have long lifespan, waiting a decade and two is no big deal.’

From this, I can conclude that something inhuman was planning to destroy the Axis cult.

... I will make it clear. I don’t want to be involved in any troublesome matters.

And I had another idea too.

Wouldn’t it be better if the Axis cult was destroyed?

Fortunately, although I wasn’t using skills to hide myself, they did not notice my presence.

I will just pretend that I never heard about this, and try to get away before I get dragged in. I put on the clothes I took off...

“Hans, don’t need to report such things one by one. I already said this plenty of times, I am here for the Hot Spring healing, don’t drag me in too.”

When I heard the female voice, I took off the clothes I put on half way instantly.

“Hey, don’t say that Wolback. This is a great chance to destroy the cult we have no chance of defeating head on. I will come here to report periodically, so you have to keep visiting the Hot Spring in this hotel.”

I wrapped a towel around my waist, head towards the screen door and opened it.

“!?” x2

The sudden sound of the door opening startled the two inside.

There was a man and woman in the bath.

The man wasn't in the bath, he had a towel around his waist and knelt with one knee besides the woman.

He was tall and well built with short brown hair. He had a surprised expression when he saw me.

That was the person who was plotting some scheme.

However, it doesn't matter to me.

I looked to the other side, and saw the woman who seemed a bit nervous soaking in the Hot Spring.

She was an onee-san with short red hair.

Her yellow pupil looked feline, a beauty with large breast, she had a great figure.

I was charmed. At this moment, the man whispered to the woman.

Did he hear what we said...?

No idea... And he is staring at me...:

After hearing their discussion, I came to my senses.

No no, this might be a mixed bath, but staring at the body of a lady was still rude.

And so, I nonchalantly walk towards the bath and prepare to clean my body.

I started showering before the eyes of the two of them.

... I am too conscious of that onee-san, and glance at her every now and then.

I really couldn't help it, I am a young healthy boy after all, so this was normal.

... Hey, he seems to be only looking at me, what is going on...

... Eh, well... He doesn't seem to have heard what we discussed. That isn't a suspicious gaze, but one filled with curiosity.

After hearing what the man said, maybe I was mistaken, but the onee-san's seem to be hiding her body deeper into the Hot Spring.

That man said something unnecessary...!

After my shower, I kept a distance from the two of them and entered the Hot Spring.

It had nothing to do with me.

Even though I did hear about their conspiracy, I didn't need to be sneaky about it.

And looking at another person's naked body is normal in a mixed bath, I didn't do anything wrong.

That's why I am staring right at her without hiding it.

Nah, hey, this is...

It, it's better than being suspected by him. Ah, I have something to do and will make a move first!

After saying that, the man left in a hurry.

... I suddenly realized that man wasn't wet at all.

I don't care what scheme you were plotting, but soaking in the Hot Spring wasn't a bad idea.

Or did he had some reason why he couldn't take a dip in the Hot Spring?

... Ara, not good, today, I am just here for the Hot Spring.

Who they were, what conspiracy they had was none of my business.

After that man named Hans left, the atmosphere inside the Hot Spring turned awkward.

What should I do, I am getting nervous.

The two of us were alone now, it was awkward to stare at her like that.

I stretched my body in the Hot Spring and exhaled deeply.

"... Erm, you don't seem to be a resident of this city. At you here on vacation?"

The onee-san suddenly spoke to me.

It seemed that the atmosphere on the other side was awkward too.

"You could say it is a vacation. I am here with my teammates to enjoy the Hot Springs."

After she heard me, the onee-san sighed softly.

"What a coincidence... I am here for the Hot Spring too. But you seem so young, why are you here to recuperate through the Hot Spring? Are you injured?"

"That's correct, I might look this way, but I am actually an adventurer. After a fight to the death with a powerful adversary, my neck suffered a serious injury. You could say this is like an honour badge for men."

The onee-san laughed in response.

"As for me, while I was fighting my other half, I couldn't snatch my powers completely back. So in order to recover my original powers, I am here for therapeutic Hot Spring baths."

She said something incredible like a joke.

"I think the mage in my team will be excited if you tell her that."

"Hahaha, is your teammate from the Crimson Magic race? I wonder how that Crimson Magic girl is doing, I even taught her magic... Actually, I won't need to take a bath in Hot Springs if I find my other half. However, it won't be so easy to find my other half."

The onee-san sighed deeply. I felt that her joke seemed a little bit too real.

"Well then, it is about time I return... Also, maybe it is better if you don't visit the Hot Springs here anymore."

After saying something confusing, the onee-san wanted to get out of the water...

“... Ah, erm, can you please don't watch my defenceless body when I get out...”

“It will be fine.”



When the onee-san who was preparing to get up heard what I said, she made a hapless expression.

Couldn't be helped then.

I turned around. The onee-san said 'thank you' softly.

"Sigh... Such a wonderful Hot Spring city, such a waste. I have to search for a new place to recuperate..."

After leaving the Hot Spring, she said something confounding.

— I was left alone in the bath, thinking about the conversation between the onee-san and that man.

'That damn cult is finally going to be destroyed.'

The onee-san even told me it was better not to visit the Hot Springs here anymore.

I didn't know why she was telling me this, but I think the onee-san meant well.

That was to say, the source of the Axis cult's fortune— these Hot Spring was being sabotaged by someone.

As someone who knew about the conspiracy, it wasn't right to ignore this, but I have no intention of getting involved.

Or rather, I really, really didn't want to be dragged into trouble anymore.

... That's right, I am here purely on a vacation, so I will pretend I didn't hear anything this time.

As I was running away from the truth.

"Wooahh! The Hot Spring in our hotel is really huge, as expected of a high class hotel! This is big enough for a swim!"

"Hey Megumin, it is poor etiquette to swim... Hey, what are you doing! The towel, why... Ahhh!"

"This is not a mixed bath, so why are you being so shy. Adventurers has to take on dirty jobs all the time, how can you be so squirmy!"

"No, that way of putting it is too weird! Megumin you are too bold! Ahh, not my towel...!"

Familiar voices could be heard from the female bath.

Megumin was apparently stripping Darkness' towel.

Good good, continue— I wanted to say that, but I couldn't see anything and had to imagine it.

I unconsciously swam to the side near the female bath.

The female and mixed bath was only separated by a wall, and the top was open.

By piling things like buckets together, it would be easily to peek over the other side.

However, I wouldn't do such things as I am a gentleman.

Hearing a 'hyaa' scream and being hit by a flying bucket, ending things so cordially was only possible in a Manga.

This was reality, if I peek at them, they wouldn't hesitate to call the police.

The sound of people entering the bath could be heard from the other side.

"Phew... it is great to soak in a Hot Spring once in a while. I only wanted to drag the lazy Kazuma out, and let him grind levels by fighting the undead Aqua will attract. It seems that choosing this place was the right move."

What, what did you...!

"That was why you told him to come here to recuperate in the Hot Springs. It's true, if we continued staying in Axel, he would never agree to participate in quests. What kind of man is he anyway? Conservative and timid, but did not care about the status of others and has a strong attitude against the nobles... He gets chased around by toads, but has the guts to fight the boss of the demon king army. Rather than strange, he is a confounding guy."

"Shh! Darkness, don't say anymore. The mixed bath is on the other side. Given the choice of men bath and mixed bath, which one do you think Kazuma will choose?"

"Definitely mixed bath. That coward always holds back at the crucial moment. However, when he has a legal choice, he will openly choose the mixed bath."

I felt like going over to beat them up.

But what they said was true. And I was indeed inside the mixed bath.

I didn't know if Megumin and Darkness realized my dilemma when they suddenly shouted.

"Kazuma! You are there right? You must be sticking your ear on the wall and imagining which part of the body Darkness washes first and panting in excitement right?"

"Me, Megumin, why are you dragging me into this...! Hey Kazuma, you heard that right? I know you are there!"

The two of them started talking to me, but I didn't have any obligation to tell them I am here.

I won't be frustrated because they saw through how I would act.

... I won't be frustrated...

I kept quiet. After a while, I could hear them debating softly.

"That's strange, is he not there? But that is impossible..."

"Eh... But no one is answering..."

I continued staying mum, in the end...

"It seemed like Kazuma is really not there. That makes me feel guilty for suspecting Kazuma. I will nonchalantly treat him to some fruit juice later."

"True, that was rude of me. We were blinded by our prejudice of him."

The two of them seemed to be reflecting on their actions.

"Anyway, he is rather dependable. I have to repent on suspecting him..."

“That’s right, he might be like that, but he is a man who will help when his comrades are really in danger. Aside from not being straightforward sometimes, his personality isn’t bad. I should reflect on myself...”

I felt embarrassed just listening to that.

After taking the bath, I will nonchalantly treat them to something.

As I was preparing to leave the bath—

“By the way Megumin, it has been bothering me, your buttocks there...”

“Ara, even if you are the one saying that, I won’t forgive you if you go on!”

“Hey...! Wait...!”

With the sound of splashing, the water from the Hot Spring next door flew to this side.

“Really! What is this pair of lecherous things! If you can spare the effort to notice my butt, why don’t you keep those large pairs of yours away!”

“Ahhh! Wait! Me, Megumin, stop...! No, not there ahhh...!”

— I was about to leave because of my guilty conscious, but returned to my original spot.

And as a precaution, I activated hide and placed my ear on the wall...!

“Now!”

“Pu!”

“Shya!?”

My temple that was rested against the wall was hit by something, and I fell into the Hot Spring.

Darkness smashed through the wall with her powerful punch.

“What did I tell you! This man is definitely here!”

“As I expected! My guess was spot on, he always look at me with lecherous eyes! How could that man full of lust not be in the mixed bath!”

I nursed my head painfully as I listen to the two of them boost their victory.

No mercy!

“Create Water!”

“Hyaaaaa!!” x2

I cast water magic at the top edge of the wall.

The two of them were splashed with water and screamed.

To counter attack, they threw all sorts of things over from the other side.

Soap, shampoo, buckets and Chomusuke.

“Hey! Don’t throw the cat over! It almost fell into the water!”

“That child hate baths, I am scratched all over after bathing it. As compensation for eavesdropping, give it a shower!”

Megumin said without mercy.

It was probably terrified of water as Chomusuke in my arms grabbed tightly onto my hand. That hurts.

It must be hard on you to have such a weird owner...

Since my existence was known, there was no need to hide anymore.

“Hey, it’s such a rare occasion to visit a Hot Spring, why can’t we go in together like a family. I already bathed with the two of you before, you won’t feel shy about it now right?”

“That man always treats us like a burden, and will only sprout nonsense about being companions at a time like this!”

“I can’t tell if you are a jerk or a lecherous pervert anymore!”

— I left the noisy bath and went back by myself.

“That, that is so mean! I...! I didn’t do anything...! I only visited the bath!”

“Aqua-sama, how terrible... Erm, please, don’t cry anymore! When your tears touch my skin, it feels like an electric shock, it hurts...”

After that, I met Aqua who was weeping in Wiz’s arms.

“What is it now? Today is a bad day, trouble keeps coming one after another!”

“What do you mean by bad day! What trouble! Why are you blaming everything on me!?”

Aqua suddenly raised her head and snapped at me.

“Erm... Aqua-sama went to the secret Hot Spring of the Axis cult, and the Hot Spring turned into normal warm water, after that...”

“They chased me out! But I am a goddess! Why must I be chased out the church worshipping me!? That is too nasty!”

By the way, this girl will purify water just by touching them.

“And...! The thing that made me angry was when I told the Hot Spring manager ‘sorry for turning the Hot Spring into warm water, but it couldn’t be helped since I am the goddess Aqua herself!’, that manager... that manager he... he laughed with a ‘puhehe’!... I am the goddess! That’s me!”

Aqua started wailing again as Wiz patted her head to console her.

I looked straight at Aqua.

“... Pu.”

“Waaaahhhhhh!!”

“Kazuma-san!”



Gifting this Suspicious Incident with Aid!

Part 1

The restaurant of the hotel was situated on the first level.

“This city’s crisis appears to be dangerous.”

As we were enjoying a healthy and delicious breakfast, Aqua said these dumb words.

What do you mean by ‘crisis is dangerous’, can’t you speak English?

“After crying the whole night, you have been acting like this. Aren’t your body traits the most dangerous thing for this city? Don’t you dare use any other hot springs except the one that comes along with the room.”

Aqua slammed her hand on the table.

“Listen to me! I didn’t purify the hot spring because I wanted to! Even if you pour all the high quality shower foam Darkness was keeping in the bathroom into the bath water, I can purify it in an instant. It is normal for me to purify a hot spring.”

“What!? You used all the shower foam! They are luxury items I ordered from the capital!”

Aqua ignored the crying Darkness and continued.

“But this is weird, I took a really long time to purify the secret hot spring of the Axis cult. My purification power is beyond ‘amazing’... For example...”

After saying that, Aqua poke her index finger into the coffee cup I was about to drink.

The black coffee turned into clear warm water in an instant.

Aqua tilted her head slightly under everybody’s gaze.

“... Right?”

“Right your head! What are you doing! Get me a new cup of coffee!”

Aqua licked her index finger she dipped into my coffee and said to me as I placed the cup full of warm water onto the table:

“As you can see, I only need just an instant. However, it took so long that time which meant the hot spring was heavily polluted... I heard the water quality in all the hot springs were turning bad right? That means the threat my Axis cult will face is not a direct assault from the demon king army, but a strike against the Axis cult’s source of income— the hot spring!”

“Is that so, amazing!” x2

“Believe me this time okay?!”

Darkness and Megumin gave a perfunctory reply at the same time. Aqua hit the table again from frustration.

The two of them were confused by Aqua.

“Anyway, it is just the water quality of a few hot springs turning bad right? Why would you link it to the demon king army?”

“Indeed, the Axis cult is weird, does dumb things and is unpopular with people, but the demon king army won’t do something so troublesome because of that right?”

... Things were that troublesome.

Damn it, the man I met in the bath last night was definitely a minion of the demon king.

He did say something about sabotaging the cult’s hot springs.

It was good that Aqua was taking precautions, but...

What to do, should I tell everyone about this?

If I do so, it would definitely be troublesome.

If we report it to the adventurers guild in this city, they will definitely ask for our assistance.

The vacation would be ruined, and we would be forced to fight against people related to the demon king army.

My instincts told me that the two I met in the bath last night were really strong.

Bathing in the hot springs of Axis cult’s headquarter, and sabotaging them with just one person.

By considering the following, a weak adventurer who fell from a tree and died during a fight with mob monsters was no match for them.

“I will fight in order to defend this city! I hope everyone can give me a hand!”

“I need to go sightseeing, I don’t have time for this.”

“I experienced how scary Axis cultists are already, so I will pass this time. I will follow Kazuma today.”

Megumin gave a straight rejection.

“Why! Something like sightseeing can be done any other day! Megumin too, don’t hate on my devotees! Nah, Darkness...”

“Eh... I, erm, well...”

“Pleaseeeee!”

“Alright alright I will go! I will accompany alright! Don’t purify my grape juice!”

Seeing Darkness giving in to Aqua reluctantly, I remembered something.

“Hey, is Wiz still sleeping? Wiz can’t handle you at all, she will follow if you tell her to.”

“Oh, after I cried the entire night holding on to Wiz, I found her on the verge of dying because of my tears. She is recuperating on the bed right now.”

“Save Wiz first before you try to save the city! Wiz has been sleeping most of this trip because of you!”

After seeing Aqua dragging Darkness and setting off, Megumin and I thought about what to do next.

Even though we wanted to sightsee, but there wasn't anywhere fun in this hot spring city.

If we wander aimlessly around, we will be approached in all sorts of manner to join the cult.

As I was troubled over what to do, Megumin tugged my sleeve.

"If there isn't any good place to go, let's head outside to cast explosion."

"You don't want to take a break even though we are on vacation?"

In Axel, Megumin's daily explosion was already a fixture in the town, so there wasn't too much problem. However, if we were to cast explosion magic inside the city, the nosey residents would definitely stir unrest.

This could be solved easily by going far enough from the city.

After I agreed to accompany her to cast explosion, Megumin sucked on her fruit juice happily.

"Good morning... Ugh, everyone is up so early..."

Appearing together with a lazy voice was Wiz whose face was exceptionally pale and devoid of life.

"Good morning, are you feeling better? I heard you almost disappeared because of Aqua."

"Yes, I even saw my teammates from my time as an adventurer waving at me from the other side of the river, shouting 'Don't come over'... But I made it through in the end."

Wiz casually said something frightening.

So this was the so called near death experience?

Even undead monsters will experience that?

"Wiz, do you have any plans for today? Megumin and I will be making a trip to the outskirts of the city."

"I don't have anything particular in mind... You two want to exit the city? The monsters around here are really strong alright? If you don't mind, allow me to tag along."

Wiz timidly made a suggestion that I like very much.

"Please do! Ara, it feels much safer being with a real arch wizard."

"Hey, tell me why I am a 'fake' wizard?"

Part 2

Before casting explosion, we decided to stroll inside the city since we had the chance.

We didn't meet any Axis cultist soliciting us today.

Megumin walked happily in front with Chomusuke on her shoulder.

While looking at her back, I asked Wiz who was walking besides me:

“Nah, Wiz, when you mentioned your teammates from your time as an adventurer, I wanted to ask you why did you turn into a lich? This might sound inappropriate— but I feel Wiz is one of the very few normal people residing in Axel. Why did the famous adventurer Wiz goes against the will of god and become a lich?”

This had been bothering me for the longest time, but it was still very sudden to ask her this.

Aside from Wiz, the only other lich I met was in a dungeon.

That person said he became a lich in order to protect the one he cherished.

Wiz hesitated for a moment...

“That’s true... It is a long story, I will explain to everyone when Aqua-sama is present too.”

She said with a gentle smile.

Hmmm, since she said so, it would be better for Aqua to hear it.

I don’t know why Wiz turned into a lich, but if she was forced to do so, maybe Aqua would change her perspective of Wiz.

Let’s talk about it with Aqua present then— After I replied, Wiz giggled.

“Alright, let’s invite Vanir-san to hear it too. When I was still an adventurer, I had a deadly fight with him.”

Wah, I want to listen.

I am also curious why she befriended Vanir after that... By the way...

“Nah, how old were you when you turn into a lich, it sound like a long time ago...”

“I was about twenty.”

Hmmm.

“No wonder, your appearance is about that age too. How long have you been like this? Eh, how old are you now?”

“Twenty, my age won’t increase after becoming a lich.”

“...? No, that...”

“I am forever twenty.”

“... Is, is that so.”

Feeling that the atmosphere was a bit heavy, I didn’t press further.

Asking a lady about her age was a taboo.

Suddenly, Megumin who was walking in front—

“By the way, I have something to ask Wiz... Aside from Wiz, are there anyone else in the demon king army who could use explosion? Erm... Do you know a big breasted onee-san who could use explosion?”

Why was she suddenly saying that?

“No, as far as I know, I am the only one who could use explosion in the demon king army. Also, it had been a long time since I visited the demon king-sama’s castle. Therefore, I am not sure about newcomers joining after that...”

“I see, that’s great...”

Megumin was relieved.

Great your head.

“Hey, what is that big breasted onee-san all about, don’t leave me hanging. Explain clearly.”

“Why you... It’s nothing important. Actually, one of the reason I visited Axel was because I heard there was a female mage that could use explosion there. It seemed like that rumour was referring to Wiz.”

“Hmmm? Then explain in detail what does it have to do with big breast?”

“At least say the whole thing, big breasted female mage. I want to be just like her. One day, we will meet again...”

“You want to be just like her... do you mean the size of your breast?”

“I will kill you.”

Megumin raised her staff to whack me on the head, but I grabbed her head to stop her.

“... Hmmm? I think I saw that person somewhere before...”

Wiz looked in the direction of the city where there was plenty of hot springs.

Following her line of sight, I saw—

“Hey Megumin, Wiz! Let’s hurry and cast the spell, then go sightseeing!”

After I saw that guy, I pulled the two of them along and left.

The guy Wiz said was familiar.

Was the man who mentioned about some conspiracy in the bath yesterday.

It was confirmed.

Since Wiz knew him, that meant he was without doubt a member of the demon king army.

Hold it, I am just a powerless person, an adventurer that was just a little bit stronger than adventurers!

Don’t involve me in troublesome matters!

“That’s true, let’s get the routine work out of the way and enjoy the tour! Wiz is here today, so I feel very safe! Just find some monsters and cast explosion at them!”

“Ahhh, Kazuma-san, don’t need to rush!... Hmmm, who was that man?”

I don't want Wiz to meet that guy.

My instincts told me to absolutely not do that.

Part 3

Maybe it was because the land in the vicinity had the blessing of water.

Once we left Alcanretia city, we could see the thick forests.

“Let's go into the forest! There must be lots of monsters there! Let's hurry and kill them all!”

Wiz and I warned the bloodthirsty Megumin to be careful as we followed her into the forest.

Using ‘detect enemy’, there was indeed a lot of monsters in the forest.

“Yup, there are tons of them, and they already detected our presence, so why aren't they attacking?”

They were right there, but they don't want to come out.

“Because we came out from Alcanretia, they are wary of us. Most of the residents there are from the Axis cult... I heard monsters tend to shy away from Axis cultist.”

Just how unpopular are those people.

“If there is any other reason... It is probably because I am here too. They instinctively avoid me who is a lich.”

Wiz said with a wry smile.

Ah, I forgot about that. Wiz was a boss(lol) of the demon king army too.

Although she was a boss(lol), but she had power befitting a boss.

When powerful beings like Beldia and Vanir came near the town, the monsters became wary.

The situation was probably the same as that time— they were afraid of Wiz.

After living in Axel for so long, the city had not been invaded by any monsters before. Maybe this was because Wiz was living there.

“Ugh... can't be help, let's settle this fast with one hit. I wanted to cast it in the midst of monsters and raise my level as well, but...”

Megumin said something dangerous as she started chanting explosion magic.

Huge amount of mana gathered around Megumin's petite body instantly.

Why was she casting spells requiring so much mana so meaninglessly? Is there a screw loose in her head?

In this world, there must be plenty of ways this spell could be used.

Before I knew it, Megumin completed her preparations.

“Explosion!”

The explosion spell flew towards somewhere in the distance, and the ground trembled with a huge boom. This girl was really casual in choosing her target.

Trees were uprooted and the terrain deformed. A corner of the forest was destroyed beyond recognition.

Because of this act of violence, the birds flew away and the forest was in an uproar.

“Hmm... Let’s go back then. Kazuma, please carry me.”

The reason for this destruction was flat on the ground when she said that arrogantly.

I was thinking about leaving the thick skinned Megumin behind.

“Can’t you make things easier for me, it always turns out like this. I will share some mana with you, so walk yourself.”

I said as I gave her some mana through drain touch.

I could only spare her a little, but Megumin managed to stand up after receiving the mana.

She peeked at her adventurers card and smiled.

“Hoho, there were a few hidden kobolds who got caught in the explosion. The adventurers card said I defeated kobolds today.”

... That wasn’t good.

Thinking about it carefully, the lowest level member in the team was me.

I raised two levels from the Lizard Runners and Hawkite Runners recently. However, my level was still the lowest.

Due to the level up, I gained more skill points, should I learn offensive skills that will help me grind levels?

As I was pondering what to learn—

“... Hmmm? Something is running this way. My detect enemy skill tell me it is really fast.”

“Oh? It is coming even after hearing the sound of explosion?”

Something was charging here from the depths of the forest. Even with my farsight skill, I couldn’t tell what it was in the dim forest.

Something black?

... I met this fellow before.

I remembered there was a ferocious monster that coexist with herds of weak monsters such as goblins and kobolds.

Simply put, it was a sabre tooth tiger with black fur.

“Grrrrrrrrrrrr!”

The nemesis of beginner adventurers, the rookie killer.

“Wiz Wiz! Quick, think of something!”

“Kazuma, use snipe, snipe! It is still far away so shoot it with snipe!”

“I left equipment like my bow in the hotel!”

“Useless, how could you be so careless! That is why your level is so low!”

“You jerk, who did you think attracted all the monsters here?! You want me to drain all your mana and leave you behind?!”

“I will take care of it, so the two of you calm down! Leave it to me, back away!”

Wiz stood in front of the two of us who were bickering.

I made some sand with create earth and prepared to support Wiz.

Megumin stuck close behind me.

... The rookie killer gradually drew closer, but Wiz showed no sign of casting any spells.

“Hey Wiz? Hey, hey— Wiz!”

“Ahhh!”

The rookie killer pounced on Wiz who stood her ground before our eyes.

Wiz was easily pressed onto the ground by the rookie killer that was as strong as a bull.

Megumin screamed while I grabbed the sand and prepared to blow it into the eyes of the rookie killer with wind magic...!

“...Eeh?” x2

The rookie killer on top of Wiz suddenly foam at the mouth and pass out.

Wiz who got out from under it didn't had a scratch on her. When the rookie killer pounced on her, she should had been hit by its claws...

“... Oh right, other than attacks from weapons enchanted by magic, all physical attacks against a lich are harmless. Also, lich had drain touch that absorb their opponent's life force and cause all sorts of abnormal status effects— poison, paralysis, sleep and curse. For Wiz, she could defeat the enemy without using magic.”

Lich were strong.

The scene of her being bullied by Aqua and Vanir all seemed so fake.

“Phew... Let's return to the city.”

Wiz sighed, dusted herself and smiled.

Part 4

When we returned to the city, we found a group of people gathered on the bustling street.

“What is happening? Some kind of event?”

“This is a tourism city after all, maybe they invited some celebrities to perform and entertain the visitors.”

Megumin and I were curious and walked in that direction.

“... It is Aqua-sama. What is she doing?”

In the middle of the crowd was Aqua.

She was standing on top of a wooden crate with something like a megaphone in hand. Besides her was Darkness with her face beet red showing an embarrassed face. What were they doing?

I recalled that was a magic item that utilized wind magic. She must be up to something.

At this moment, Aqua started shouting loudly.

“My beloved Axis cultists! Right now, the demon king army are conducting destructive attacks on this city!”

Darkness lowered her head embarrassingly when she heard that.

“Their destructive attack refers to the poisoning of the city’s hot springs! I already confirmed that many of the hot springs had been hit!”

That girl, did she inspected all the hot springs this morning?

“I have never heard of that. I just bathed in that hot spring there, it seem to be fine.”

One of the audience commented.

Aqua nodded in agreement.

“That is because I purified the poison in all the hot springs. All the hot springs in the vicinity had been purified by me. However, we can’t let our guards now yet! Everyone, please don’t visit the baths before this incident is concluded!”

The people around her started wavering.

Aqua then poked Darkness who was standing beside her.

Darkness trembled, showed a face as if she was going to cry and remained silent.

An old man pulling a cart said:

“This is the city of hot springs, priest-san. If you forbid the customers from visiting the hot springs, how can we do business?”

“That’s right, and why would the demon king army poison a place like this?”

The other audiences supported him.

“They did this in order to cut off the tourism income for this city off, and crush the income source of the Axis cult! That’s right, the demon king army fears the Axis cultists! I won’t allow them to stir trouble because they are jealous of our hot springs! Please, faithful believers of the Axis cult—”

At this moment.

“Ah! So there you are! Hey, what did you do to my hot spring!? It is just warm water now!”

Probably the owner of a hot spring somewhere.

The owner glared at Aqua some distance away from the crowd.

Not just him, a group of menacing people were glaring at her.

“Ah, that’s her alright! She dares show her face around here! Hey— everyone! Grab her! She is turning the hot springs in this city into warm water, how evil!”

“Yeah, she might be a dog of the demon king army here to destroy the Axis cult!”

What an unexpected development.

She said that she will protect the hot springs, but she was the one to destroy it.

“No, wrong! There is a reason for this! Let me explain! The hot springs I purified is poisonous! I admit that some of the normal hot springs might have been purified too, but this was for the sake of everyone...”

“If it is true then tell us earlier! And even if you purify the hot springs, it is impossible to purify such a huge number of hot springs! You must have sneaked in when no one was around right! Using that chance, you drain all the hot spring water away and replace it with warm water for showering, right?!”

“That, that’s not—! Because, if others saw me perform the purification, my real identity would be exposed! That will cause a huge commotion...!!”

Ahhh, this was bad!

She will definitely say something she shouldn’t say.

“Hey Megumin, Wiz! Let’s get out of here before she notice us! We have to pretend we don’t know her, understand?!”

“Hmmm!? She already made this big mess, and you are planning to abandon her, Kazuma?! And it can only be settled if you intervene, Kazuma, hurry up and do something!”

“Aqua-sama is going to cry you know!? Kazuma-san, if this goes on...”

As I listened to their pleas, I glanced at Aqua who was some distance away.

At this moment, one of the hot springs owners shouted:

“Is rumour mongering all you could do?! The situation is really serious now! And who are you anyway!? Are you really a minion of the demon king?”

“Eh!? No I’m not! Nah, Darkness, don’t just stand there, say something! And say the lines like I told you— ‘Axis cult, Axis cult is depending on you!’ Say it, don’t be shy, go on!”

“A, Axis cult... is... depend...”

With the crowd staring at her, Darkness mumbled with her face red.

... My condolences.

“Ahhh, really! Alright, I will tell you who I am! Devoted Axis cultist! My name is Aqua. That’s right, the object of your worship, the goddess Aqua! My beloved believers! I am here in the mortal world in order to save you all!”

Aqua stood on the wooden crate as she finally said that out loud.

The audience who was just listening silently turned silent.

“... Okay, let’s go, quick! Megumin!”

“... This is bad. It might be salvageable earlier, but it’s a gone case now, let’s run!”

“Wait, wait— Kazuma-san! Megumin-san! What about Aqua-sama and Darkness-san...!”

Megumin and I decided to make our escape. Suddenly, angry voices started erupting.

“Don’t joke about this you heathen!”

“You think you can impersonate Aqua-sama just because you have blue hair and eyes?! You will receive divine retribution!”

“Death penalty! Tie her up and throw her in the lake! If she is really Aqua-sama, she won’t die even if she is thrown into the water!”

“Wahhhh! No!! I am telling the truth, I am really Aqua!!”

“Ahhh! No, don’t throw stones...! No, no...! Aqua, hide behind me quick!”

“.....” x2

“Hey, where are the two of you going off to, Aqua-sama she...!”

Megumin and I left Aqua and Darkness who were being pelted by stones and ran away.

— We made a roundabout way back to the hotel. Aqua was already back before we returned.

“Wahhhh!”

She kept wailing.

I think she had been crying after coming to this city.

“A, Aqua-sama, I brought you some warm milk, take a sip and cool down...”

Wiz kept consoling Aqua who was sobbing in the middle of the girl’s room.

Darkness seemed beaten up, but her face was still flushed as she drank tea with satisfaction.

They were cursed and pelted with stones after that. However, she seemed to like this city full of weirdoes.

Let’s leave this one here too.

“That’s so cruel! I, I worked so hard for everyone! Why must I be pelted with stones by my own believers! Waaahhhh!”

“Aqua-sama, please, please calm down! Or else, I will disappear because of Aqua-sama’s aura because you are upset—!”

The hapless Wiz offered hot milk to Aqua.

Aqua looked at the milk, sniffed and said.

“... I want to drink wine.”

“You aren’t upset at all right?”

Wiz rushed downstairs to find wine. Aqua lifted her face swollen from all the crying.

“No matter what, there is definitely some sort of sabotage being conducted. Many of the hot springs I visited had been seriously contaminated. If the customers visit those baths, they will definitely fall ill.”

“Since Aqua whose only saving grace is her priestly powers said so, it must be true right? But we can’t find the culprit this way.”

”That’s true. Let’s just go to the adventurers guild and the hot springs management to make a report, we will leave the rest to them.”

Aqua grounded her teeth unwillingly.

This involved the Axis cult, therefore she wanted to resolve it through her own hands.

However, they might be the devotees she cherished, but there was no need to risk being beaten up and cursed.

“Wooo... But if this goes on, my cute believers will...”

Aqua grabbed the corner of the table tightly with her face full of tears.

There was no helping it then.

“I will give you a hand tomorrow, but I won’t participate in any fights alright? If we can find the culprit, we will hand it over to the adventurers guild to resolve it, will that be fine?”

When she heard me, Aqua’s face brimmed.

Part 5

“Well then, I will wait in the hotel. Please be careful.”

The next morning.

Wiz saw us off and we head for this city’s adventurers guild.

I left Wiz behind to be our point of contact.

She will collate the intelligence and tell us if anything pops up.

Leaving Wiz in the hotel, the four of us head towards the hot springs.

“Anyway, how would we know who the culprit is? Even if we find someone suspicious, we have to catch him in the act for it to be convincing.”

I had an idea who the culprit was.

It was probably the tanned skin brown haired man I met in this hotel's hot spring.

I haven't seen that man or that onee-san since then.

That onee-san also said she can't recuperate in this hot spring anymore. She has probably left the city.

In that case, only that man would be working in the dark alone...

"Hehehe, leave it to me! I already thought of a way to find the culprit! Listen, the culprit will visit several hot springs in a day. Visiting as a customer would be the least suspicious way of doing it."

On this rare occasion with Aqua using her brain, she said arrogantly.

"We will then ask all the managers of the hot springs, and ask them which customers they had the deepest impression of— I already distributed survey forms to them..."

"You are really working hard on this..."

She really cherished her devotees. It would be great if she had this drive normally.

"I see, No matter how much someone loves the hot spring, bathing several times in one time would be suspicious. By collating the customer that frequents the most from the managers, we can lock on to the target... Right?"

The smart Megumin agreed with a nod.

"Also, If something happens to the hot spring that person frequents, it means he must be the culprit."

Darkness was impressed.

"That's the idea! Come, let's collect the survey forms back."

I hope she can maintain this attitude from now on.

I was surprised by Aqua's efficiency once she got serious.

We split up to collect the survey forms from the managers.

And gathered in a garden, tabulating the results on a bench.

"— The results of the survey are out! The features of the most frequent customer is..."

"A woman with blue hair and eyes, wearing a light purple hagaromo."

"So you are the culprit."

"Wrong! Wait, I did visit a lot of hot springs, but that was to purify the water! Let's look at the survey about the water quality turning bad, the last one to visit is the most suspicious!"

Following her directions, we compiled the features of the customer that last entered the hot spring before the water quality dropped.

"A woman with blue eyes and hair changed the hot spring water into warm water as a practical joke..."

“... Isn't that also you.”

“Why is it like this! What is going on!? This is useless!”

“No, hold on.”

The raging Aqua was about to tear up the survey forms when Megumin stopped her.

“Look, this ‘man with tanned skin and brown hair’ was second in his visit frequency to Aqua. Does he like hot springs that much?”

Hoho, as expected of the Crimson Magic race known for their high intelligence.

“So he is the criminal as expected. He is a tall man with bulging muscles.”

I said unwittingly as I took the survey forms from Megumin...

“...Hey, wait, what do you mean by ‘as expected’, why do you know something like that? Were you secretly worried for me and investigated, even though you keep saying it is troublesome? Is Kazuma a Tsundere?”

Aqua said with eyes full of anticipation.

“No, the first day we came to this city, I met this guy by chance in the hot spring saying ‘That damn cult is finally going to be destroyed. The work in destroying the secret hot spring is complete, the progress in the other hot springs are also proceeding smoothly. Now, we just need to wait. For us who have long lifespan, waiting a decade and two is no big deal.’... Wahhh! What are you doing? Stop!”

After hearing what I said, Aqua started strangling my neck!

“Why didn't you say so earlier! If you told me earlier, I wouldn't need to work so hard!”

“Hey stop it! I'm here to bath in the hot spring and recuperate! Why must I be dragged into troublesome matters all the time?! Why would I plunge my head straight into trouble!”

“This man finally admitted it! Don't you have any pride as an adventurer?! No matter how you looked at it, that is the scene of the demon king army scheming!”

“Aqua, I will hold this trash down, beat him up good!”

“Hey, wait, stop! You really want to go!? Don't blame me for not holding back!”

Part 6

“Wooo... I was ravaged... He actually fought back...”

After losing her mana from drain touch, Megumin laid on my shoulder and said grudgingly.

“What a petty man...”

Darkness whose face was covered in mud because of a combination of create earth and create water magic added tiredly.

At this point, Aqua whose hair had patches of frost due to Freeze showed a piece of paper to us.

Right now, we were in this city's adventurers guild.

Aqua sketched a portrait that eerily resembles the real thing from the survey results and my testimony.

We were here in the adventurers guild to request for them to arrest this man.

“It is troubling to suddenly ask us to do that. We can’t arrest this person just with your one sided account. Adventurers with good reputation and is active here for a long time might be okay, but it is hard to believe some unknown adventurers we are not familiar with... At least give us some evidence...”

The receptionist at the guild looked trouble.

Aqua shifted close to this receptionist.

“Hey. Since you live in this city, you must be an Axis cultist right? Look at my face, does it look familiar?”

“...? I am not an Axis cultist... Hmmm, now that you mentioned it, I did see...? Ahh! In that shop downtown, the second most popular—!”

“Wrong! Say any more and you will receive divine retribution! I have never worked in such a dirty place before! And why is it second most popular! How infuriating!”

Hearing Aqua who took the bait after hearing some nonsense, I remembered—

Compared to this goddess(lol) who wasn’t recognized in this city full of her devotees, we have someone more famous.

“Hey Megumin, back me up.”

“Back you up? What do you want—?”

While talking to Megumin who was on my back, I shared some of my mana with her through drain touch, allowing her to stand by herself.

After letting Megumin down, I pushed Darkness to the front.

“Look closely at who this great person is! She is the daughter of the Dustiness clan, the great noble family known as the ‘beloved sword of the kingdom’— Lady Dustiness fon Lalatina! How impudent to say that she is some unknown adventurer!”

“Eeh?” x2

Darkness and the receptionist yelled at the same time.

Megumin who instantly knew what I was planning went to Darkness’ side.

“My lady, please show the item that proves your identity as a member of the Dustiness family for the block headed staff to see!”

“Hmmm!? E, even Megumin! Wooo... To think I will use my clan’s name for such a thing...”

She probably didn’t want to use her authority as a noble. She squirmishly took out a pendant.

That was the pendant I saw during my criminal trial.

This was probably as powerful as a master ball was to pokemons.³

“This is really...! My, my apologies! We will put this man on the wanted list immediately!”

The pendent was super effective. The receptionist took the sketch from Aqua in a hurry.

“As expected of Darkness! That’s how you use the authority of a noble!”

“Ah, Aqua! Don’t say that promote negative influence so loudly!”

“— We, we have started a manhunt for that man as instructed by Lady Dustiness, we will contact your hotel if we receive any news!”

“Ah, yes, sorry for troubling you.”

As the guild staff saw us off with a bow, Darkness shrunk her body guiltily.

I added to the staff from behind Darkness.

“Ah, by the way, please charge all the necessary expenses for the manhunt to the Dustiness family.”

“!?”

Part 7

After preparing for the manhunt, on our way back to the hotel.

“You jerk! Jeeerrrrkkk!!”

Darkness was still angry.

“What!? I said I’m sorry already right!? Let Aqua pay for the manhunt expenses then.”

“Eh!? It’s on me!?”

“That’s not the point! My family name is not to be used so lightly...!”

“Hey Aqua. The Dustiness house has their hands full raising this pervert, so pay for the bill alright? Isn’t this for the sake of saving your cult anyways?”

“Ahhhh... Alright alright I get it, it can’t be helped. The Dustiness house has it hard huh, I will pay then.”

“Nuaaahhh!”

“Wahhhh! You, what, stop it!”

I dodged the pouncing Darkness deftly and took a defensive stance.

“Really, how long are the two of you going to fight. There are people watching. Darkness, you are sort of a lady, so act like one...”

“What do you mean by ‘sort of’!? I am a proper lady! Ahhh really...!”

³ Jap text refers to a period drama that ends each episode by revealing an item, Inro, that reveals the identity of the hero.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mito_K%C5%8Dmon

I shushed the resigned Darkness and said to her:

“Just like the time we fought the Destroyer, you are useless most of the time. Now that you have a chance, you should do something that befits nobility!”

“None of your business! Damn it, you have been playing me like a monkey since just now!”

“Haha, your attack is too easy to read! How would your clumsy attack ever hit me?!”

“I will kill you!”

“Stop being noisy, what are you two doing in public?!”

With a yell from Megumin, Darkness who was being bullied by me and spouting curses finally calmed down.

“Forget it, people who don’t change their attitude even after knowing I am a noble are rare.”

Darkness said with annoyance.

“Everyone always say they don’t mind, but will still be slightly afraid of me...”

She might be feeling glad for not changing our attitudes towards her even after finding out she was a noble.

“I don’t care about noble or peasants, Darkness is just Darkness, I will always treat you the same. And the Crimson Magic race doesn’t fear authority, and will treat royalty and aristocrats the same okay?”

“Megumin...”

“In the country I was from, there are plenty of people complaining about the politics. I am not concerned about status or gender. I won’t show bias towards a weird noble like you.”

“Even Kazuma... No, wait, did you say weird noble?”

Darkness grabbed the back of my collar angrily.

I didn’t answer her, turning to look at Aqua who was at the tail of the party.

“Hey Aqua, tell her what you think too, don’t let her flatter herself and be conscious about her status as a lady... Hey, what are you doing, what is that?”

I stopped. Aqua was nimbly creating something small as she was walking.

It was something like clay, I don’t know where she got it from

She was focused on making it.

“This is...? Ah, this is a fake of the pendant Darkness took out just now. Look, it looks exactly the same right? With this, I can claim to be a child of the Dustiness house, and say anything I want... Ahhhh!”

Darkness grabbed the clay from Aqua’s hand and threw it out.

“— Welcome back! Any progress?”

Wiz came out from the hotel to receive us. We reported what happened to her.

Since the guild had handed out wanted notices to the hot springs, our quest was complete.

That man won't be able to get near the hot spring or wander around this city any more.

We just need to stick to the original plan and enjoy the hot spring in the hotel.

"We did something incredible again. But it is great that we stopped the schemes of the demon king army... Hey Darkness, you are a sheltered lady so you might not know. There is a custom among the commoners that man and woman who goes on vacation together has to visit the mixed bath once together. We will be going back tomorrow, so let's get it done tonight."

"!? I, I have never heard of such a strange custom!"

"I already said it is a custom of the commoners. You are a noble so there is no way you could have heard that. If you want to break the gap between you and real commoners like us, you have to follow the ritual once."

"So, there really is such a custom...!?"

"How is that possible."

When she heard Megumin's retort, the red faced Darkness attacked me again, and I dodge deftly again. Suddenly, someone knocked the door to the room hastily.

"Coming, who is it?"

Aqua opened the door and found the staff we met at the adventurers guild. He must have ran here and was out of breath.

"What, what happened?"

I asked that person, an ominous feeling welling in my heart.

"Terrible news! The hot springs...! Contaminated water is flowing out from the hot springs everywhere in the city...!"



Gifting this Polluted Hot Spring City with a Goddess!

Part 1

The morning after the hot springs in the city was seriously contaminated.

After having breakfast, we gathered in the girl's hotel room.

"I think there are problems with the water source."

Aqua who spent yesterday purifying the hot springs said.

The phenomenon of polluted water flowing out was temporary.

It was akin to some simulation test, coming out all at one go before stopping.

After that girl received the report from the staff, she rushed into the city and cleansed the hot springs one by one...

"The water source? That should be the top of the hill behind the Axis cult's main base right?"

Aqua nodded.

That gigantic church was the Axis cult's headquarters.

Behind the church was this city's source of life and finance, the hot spring mountain.

And of course, that place was heavily guarded. Normal people won't be permitted entry.

"Indeed, it is difficult to poison the hot springs one by one. The other party was pressured by the manhunt order and decided to hit the source directly— that makes sense."

It was true that attacking the source was much simpler than taking out the hot springs one at a time.

"But how did he infiltrate such a heavily guarded place..."

Wiz frowned.

"Kazuma, what are you eating? Give me one too."

Darkness pulled off a piece of the pizza-like junk food I was eating and sent it towards her mouth.

.....

"I have been feeling that recently, you are dumber than Aqua."

"!?"

The piece of not-pizza fell off before it reached Darkness' mouth.

She had a surprised face and turned stiff.

“Hey, what do you mean by that! As if you are implying that I am usually like a dummy!”

“Not like a dummy, you are one! ...Ahh, enough! I apologize, I’m sorry! You worked hard and used your head this time! — I already apologized, so return my pizza to me!”

As Aqua and I was fighting over the pizza, Darkness stood up straight with a spring.

“... Source of the water right. Hey Kazuma, how long are you going to play around, time to go! Water source! We will head to the hill behind the cult headquarters to investigate!”

She announced in high spirits.

She was probably over conscious about the fact that aside from using her clan’s authority, she had not done anything noteworthy yet.

“Alright, let’s go to the water source and take a look.”

Part 2

To the left of the Axis cult headquarters was a huge lake, that is the source of the city’s water supply.

On the hill above the church was the source of the city’s hot springs.

The path to the source was guarded by the city’s Knight Band.

“Nah, I am an arch priest from the Axis cult! Look closely! Hey, look at my adventurer's card carefully!”

Aqua shoved the adventurers card in the face of the knight on guard duty.

Our path was blocked at the foot of the hill.

“No, even if you are the arch priest of the Axis cult, I can’t let you through.”

“No one but the manager of the hot springs is allowed to go in.”

The knight who pushed Aqua back had no plans of looking at her adventurer's card.

The two knights were probably suspicious after seeing how our group was dressed.

To prepare for any battle, we were all fully equipped for battle.

A group of fully armed people suddenly wanted to pass through the checkpoint— It was normal that the knights would not accede.

“Thou devoted Axis cultist... Hear me, this is a necessary action, a just course, if thou allow passage, this city shall...”

“Ah, I am a believer of Eris” x2

“Why?! Why do you follow Eris’ religion even though you are living in this city?!... Hey, please, let me go in! There is big trouble at the source! This is for the sake of the hot springs city! I... I...! I just want to save this city!”

Aqua clung to one of the knight and started wailing.

I already had a plan in mind, but this looked fun, so I decided to just watch for now.

“No means no. Go home!”

“Ah, wait! I suddenly realized that you are really handsome! Your profile is just like a red dragon, dominantly strong.”

“You mean my face looks like a lizard?”

After realizing crying won't work, Aqua started resorting to flattery.

“... Alright, if you won't let me through no matter what, I will make you Eris devotees taste some hard medicine, and run to the Axis church by the hill side to repent!”

“What nonsense are you saying!”

"Damn it, that's why they say the personality of Axis cultists are so terrible! And your blue hair and eyes— Aren't you that person who was playing the practical joke of turning hot springs into warm water!?"

“No, that's wrong! I am just purifying the hot springs...!”

“So it is you! All the more reason that I can't let you through! Go back!”

Aqua who switched to intimidation tactics was stone walled.

“As I expected. You are up Darkness, a rare opportunity for you to shine.”

“Rare!? Hey, I do contribute occasionally okay! Stop, stop pushing!”

Megumin who was beside me seemed to realize what my plans were.

“Take a good look at who this great person is! She is the daughter of the grand noble house Dustiness— Lady Dustiness fon Lalatina! This is an emergency and concerns the survival of this city!”

“Ah!?”

“That is so, you can treat this as an order from house Dustiness. The hot springs contamination incident that happened yesterday should be the result of someone poisoning the source. We are here to investigate on the lady's order.”

Darkness who was being pushed to the front grabbed the pendant in front of her chest tightly.

“This is an emergency, but if I abuse my authority like this...!”

I grabbed Darkness who wanted to say something from behind.

“Here my lady, please take out the pendant proving your identity that you are hiding in your chest! My lady, please don't resist...! Hey, cough it out my lady!”

“Kazuma, grab on tight! I will... ahhh! That hurts, Darkness that hurts! Wiz, Megumin! Use this chance to grab the pendant!”

“Wiz, you take her right hand, Aqua take her left... My lady, please stop your futile resistance!”

“So, sorry! I am sorry Darkness-san!”

“Stop it you all... The Dustiness house won’t permit such abuse of authority...! Ahhh!?”

Megumin forcefully took the pendant from Darkness’ hand and showed it to the knights.

“Here, look at this! You will grant us entry now right?!”

“My, my apologies!”

“Please forgive us!”

The two knights opened a path hurriedly. Megumin seemed to enjoy the dramatic change in attitude she saw from the two knights.

“... Let me borrow this for a while.”

“Of course not, give it back now!”

Darkness snatched the pendant back and Megumin was a little depressed.

— At this moment, the knights said respectfully.

“Er, erm Lady Dustiness, I know you are here to investigate, but the manager of the hot springs had already went in...”

“The manager said he will investigate the cause, and to not let anyone through...”

We looked at each other after hearing what the knights said.

At such a time?

Did the hot springs manager thought the same as us?

... I will ask just to be safe.

“Is the manager a tanned man with short brown hair?”

“No, he is a blonde old man who had been managing the hot springs all these years.”

I guess wrong... So where is that man now?

His appearance was prominent so it was just a matter of time before he got caught through the manhunt.

“There are wild beasts in the hills ahead. Please be careful if you are going there, Lady Dustiness.”

Part 3

Bashing through the thick vegetation we headed up the hill that still had remnants of snow.

I thought the vegetation would be sparse because of the sulphur from the hot springs, so I didn’t expect such a scene.

It’s such a rare opportunity to go on a hot spring vacation trip, why did I have to hike up a hill?

“By the way, I didn’t know Darkness-san is a daughter of the Dustiness house! Sorry for my impudence in the past.”

Wiz wasn’t told about Darkness being a noble, and lowered her head respectfully.

“No, I hope Wiz can treat me with sincerity like before. I will feel better that way.”

“Is that so? Since Darkness-san insist...”

Wiz smiled gently and Darkness was relieved.

“That should be the reaction of normal people... I am relieved after seeing Wiz’s attitude. This bunch had been so mean to me...”

Darkness cleared the vegetation with a complicated expression, walking at the head of the group.

“You are such a troublesome girl. Make it clear whether you want us to treat you like a noble or commoner!— Eh, if you want us to treat you like a lady, then change your temper, crude language and stubborn nature.”

“I am not troublesome! And Kazuma has no right to say my language is crude! You are younger than me right!? Not just me, you are rude to everyone...!”

“That is because I treat you— Darkness as a comrade. That’s right, in my heart, you are not the aristocrat lady Lalatina who is older than me, but the dependable crusader Darkness.”

“... Is, is that so. That, that’s great...”

Darkness’ face blushed and she walked ahead quietly. I mumbled.

“So gullible.”

“Very gullible.”

“Too gullible.”

“Ev, everyone!”

“.....?”

When she heard Wiz, Darkness who was in a great mood turned back with a puzzled face.

“Anyway, we have been walking for quite some time. Aren’t there wild beasts living here? Erm... Will that manager who entered before us be okay? Isn’t he an old man?”

I asked casually.

As if it was answering my question, the sound of something fighting came from the front.

“Really Kazuma! Why are saying something that will raise a flag!”

“I, I didn’t, stupid! I just thought about that suddenly...!”

“Stop fighting and let’s see what is happening!”

With Wiz urging us on, we hurried to the source of the sound.

Before us was a bizarre scene.

“How, how could this be...”

Megumin said in surprise.

When we arrive, the manager was nowhere to be seen, in his place was—

“This, could it be a rookie killer...?”

Darkness approached that black object and observed from a close distance.

There was no doubt that a battle happened here.

However, there were no traces of sword or magic damages. Only the black skin of the rookie killer and large canine fangs.

These horrible remains seemed to be the work of strong acids...

“This rookie killer wasn’t the one we met yesterday, was it defeated by a veteran adventurer? Although Wiz defeated one easily...”

Everyone knew what I wanted to say.

— Could an old man defeat a rookie killer?

Which means...!

“That hot springs grandpa is really strong! Let’s meet up with him so he can protect us!”

... Only one person didn’t follow my train of thoughts.

“There are no grandpas in this world that could take out a rookie killer alone! With that in mind, this was done by some inhuman monster!”

“Wh, what! Didn’t the butcher shop grandpa in Axel hunt toads and fire drakes alone?! A grandpa that could take out a rookie killer alone might exist too!”

“Don’t compare the old people in the world with the weirdoes in that town! Just look at how the rookie killer died, there are too many suspicious points!”

That’s right, the carcass was melted thoroughly. Was this some kind of spell?

Was there such a vicious magic that could dissolve the body of an enemy?

“In short, we can’t let our guard down, that grandpa is not that simple.”

Everyone except Aqua nodded silently.

... Aqua muttered unhappily.

“The grandpa chef in Axel turned a ferocious brutal alligator into a main dish too...”

Why were you still harping on this?

Part 4

After that, we walked for a long time. The fortunate thing was that it wasn't easy to lose our way.

To divert the water from the hill to the hot springs, there were six pipes channeling the water.

If you want to go to the source, just follow the pipes.

However, walking on the road piled with snow sap our stamina really fast.

I thought everyone must be tired too. I turned back while thinking that...

"Nah Wiz, aren't you a lich? Don't you have any convenient lich magic to let us fly straight to the top?"

"Aqua-sama, the spells of liches are not all powerful. I did develop a few magic, but they are all offensive oriented..."

"Ho, to develop magic on your own, that's impressive. Don't tell me they are stronger than explosion."

"Eh... I am on edge because I heard there were monsters, but we didn't met any... Why is that so..."

Everyone was so energetic.

"Hey you all! Wait, slower! If we suddenly meet, the enemy, and is, out of breath, how, can we fight?"

I said while panting, and Aqua tilted her head and said:

"... I knew Kazuma's stats are bad, but I didn't know it was so terrible."

Ughh, infuriating!

"Anyway, what is Kazuma's stamina? Don't tell me it is the same level as me, an arch wizard."

Megumin asked.

As I continued panting, I handed my card to Megumin silently.

"... How should I put this. Kazuma has the lowest level here. Don't worry, just train up from now on and your stats will grow."

Megumin awkwardly averted her eyes from the card and started consoling me.

"Hey, you mean my stats are really on the same level as you right?!"

"Let's take a break! We walked a long distance in one short, but there is no sign of the grandpa. Instead of dashing ahead at full speed, we should conserve our energy."

"Hey, don't tell me my stats are lower than yours! Is my strength and stamina lower than yours?!"

Megumin didn't answer and sat where she stood.

I, I should grind my level...

After the break, we started marching again. And finally, we reached the end of one of the pipe.

Before the pipe was the source where the hot springs water came from...

No, wait.

“Hey, the hot spring water is completely black!”

“!? This is poison! I am absolutely sure!”

Aqua shouted as she dipped her hand into the completely black hot spring in a panic.

“It burns! Wahhhh, it is scalding! It is scalding my hand!”

“You idiot! Why are you putting your hand directly into the hot spring source! Pull your hand out!”

“But, but! It burns!”

Although Aqua was crying, she still refused to pull her hand out.

I rushed to her side and cast a spell on her hand.

“Freeze!”

I cool the water with my magic...

... But my frost magic was too weak, it didn't have much effect.

“Freeze!”

Wiz rushed over to help and used frost magic too.

Probably because our magic capacity and race were different, Wiz's spell lowered the temperature of the source in an instant.

“Phew... Thanks Wiz, and Kazuma... I will thank you a tiny bit too.”

“What tiny bit!”

Wiz cast freeze multiple times into the water Aqua was sticking her hand into.

As time goes by, the black murky hot spring gradually became clear.

“That will do... But, I can't purify the water in the pipes. It would take some time before this hot spring can be used again... Heal!”

After purifying the hot springs, Aqua casted healing magic on her scalded hand. That energetic idiot looked really depressed right now.

Seeing her like this made me feel uneasy too...

In any case, it was confirmed that someone was polluting the sources.

I don't know how that man and the manager was related, but we will find out if we continue to investigate.

— We saw other pipes connected to the source too, and as expected, they were all contaminated.

Aqua cleansed them one by one. She had already cleansed four out of six of the pipes.

However, it would be a long time before these hot water becomes hot spring water.

And now, we had almost made our way to the peak of the hill.

Just when I was about to give up, throw my bags down and leave, I found something that looked like a human figure in the distance.

I used farsight to observe that figure.

“... Hmmm? So it is that guy after all.”

The one I saw wasn't the blond old man the knights mentioned, but the man I saw in the bath that day.

“What is the matter? Why are you suddenly stopping?”

Aqua looked at me who stopped suddenly in confusion.

I pointed ahead and told them the wanted criminal was right in front.

“Ahhh, I can see someone there. What is he doing there? Is there a hot spring source there too?”

“Probably. Look, that pipe is linked there... Wait, that guy is...!”

Hey, he is poisoning the source right now!

He seemed to notice us rushing over too.

When he saw us, he looked baffled.

“What are all of you doing here? This place is off limits to all except the manager, so how did you get here?”

Aqua pointed at the man nonchalantly asking our purpose of visit and shouted.

“Hey, are you still playing dumb!? How dare you destroy the hot springs in this city! I will purge you!”

“Destroy the hot springs? I am the manager of the hot springs okay? What are you saying...”

The man lied boldly. Aqua looked at us haplessly to seek support.

If you were not confident of talking him down, then don't start it.

“It is useless to play dumb okay? And what are you doing here? It is too troublesome to poison the hot springs one at a time, so you are going right for the source? The uproar of polluted water gushing out was probably your way of confirming that the source was actually linked to this city, right?”

“We saw that all the hot springs had been contaminated on our way here. Megumin already asked, so can you tell us what you are doing here? I am Dustiness fon Lalatina. Allow me to use my authority as a noble to invite you to come with us.”

In the face of Megumin and Darkness' accusation, the man shook his head slowly.

"I already said, I don't know what you are talking about. Do you want to search the things I have with me? You will never find anything poisonous... with me...?"

The confident voice of that man started breaking.

He was looking at...

"Hmm? Who is that... I think I have seen you somewhere..."

Wiz placed her hand on her chin as she stared at that man and pondered.

When he saw Wiz, that man turned around immediately.

"An, Anyway, I am here to investigate the reason behind the pollution, erm..."

"Ahh! It's Hans-san! Hans-san right?!"

Wiz shouted the name of the man who was still making excuses.

"Who, who is Hans? I am the manager of the hot springs in this city..."

"Hans-san! Long time no see, I am Wiz, the lich Wiz!"

The man who was repeatedly addressed as Hans tried to play it off, but his voice was shaking. Wiz chatted him up unhesitantly.

Hans glanced at Wiz who was staring at him.

"Lich, you mean those dangerous undead monsters, lich right? I don't know what you all are saying... An, anyway I don't have any means of poisoning, and you have no proof..."

"Ah, speaking of poison... I recall that Hans-san is a deadly poison slime variant type! Did Hans-san released your poison into the source?!"

Hans' excuse was torn apart by Wiz unwittingly.

She even rushed to Hans' side.

"Hans-san! Why are you ignoring me! It's me, I am Wiz! Hans-san can shapeshift too right, you must have changed into the form of the grandpa manager to gain entry right? Hans-san, hey, Hans-san!?"

"Can, can you calm down, I don't know you... Stop, don't shake me, please!"

Seeing Hans denying it to the end, Wiz grabbed Hans' shoulders and shook.

"Did you really forget about me!? I am Wiz, back when we were in the demon king castle we—"

"Ahhhhh! I just remembered I have something urgent to do! I found out the reason behind the contamination after the investigation! I have to rush back to the city... Farewell everyone... Can you let me through?"

Aqua: "Where are you going Hans!"

Darkness: "You shall not pass, Hans!"

Megumin: “You think such an excuse will work, Hans?!”

The three girls stepped in front of Hans to stop him.

Hans showed a stiff face and back away.

“Stop struggling and come clean Hans.”

“Don’t keep calling me Hans, Hans, you bunch of worms! What is Wiz doing here?! Didn’t you say you will open a small shop after leaving the demon king castle!? Stop fooling around in the hot spring city, go back to work!”

Hans finally revealed his true nature and retaliated, retorting Wiz.

“How, how mean! I did work hard! For some reasons the harder I work, the more losses I made. But I am still working hard every day!”

Wiz replied in a strange manner. Now is not the time to talk about that.

Hans sighed deeply and shook his head.

“Sigh... Why did it turn out this way. I spent years to investigate this city, and only decided on this course of action after everything is in place... Wiz, I remember that you don’t provide help to the demon king army in any form aside from the maintenance of the demon king castle barrier. However, you shouldn’t be working against me. We shouldn’t disrupt each other. So why are you in my way?”

“Eh!? I, I got in Hans-san’s way!? I only greeted Hans-san since we haven’t met in a long time!”

“That was enough to disrupt my work! Thanks to you my identity had been exposed!”

Was she really stupid, or pretending to be retarded?

Hans who had been exposed by Wiz lower his body posture into a battle stance.

“What are you going to do Wiz? Fight me? Or let me through?”

Hans was only wary of Wiz alone.

That was normal, according to Wiz, this guy was a mutant of some kind of deadly poison slime.

Deadly poison sounds scary, but it was just a slime after all.

As a lich, Wiz was far ahead in the monster level standings.

I thought I met a powerful foe in the bath back then, to think it was just a slime.

“How could I do that... Hans-san is my friend. Erm, I will be troubled if you destroyed the hot springs... Can’t we... resolve this through discussion?”

Wiz said apologetically. Hans laugh out loud.

“Hahaha! Your thinking is the same as before, you are a lich but you are so naive! When you were an arch wizard and was killing us off, you never thought about saying ‘resolve through discussion’ right!?”

“Ugh... Back, back then, I was still immature...”

As Wiz said so, she started to fidget embarrassingly.

Was the gentle Wiz a violent woman in the past?

After returning to town, let's find a chance to talk about the past together with Vanir.

To do that—

“Hey, sorry for interrupting your reunion time... You are Hans right? I am Satou Kazuma, the one who directed the fight to defeat the demon king army boss Beldia and mobile fortress Destroyer. Just recently, I even defeated the devil of foresight Vanir.”

— I had to solve this commotion quick and return to Axel!

“What!? A man who looked as terribly weak as you!?... Even your equipment is so bad I don't even want to look at you, and you defeated Beldia and Vanir!?”

The state of my equipment is none of your business.

“How mean of you to say I am terribly weak. I might look this way, but I am a man who walked the thin line between life and death several times.”

“Well, he did die several times.”

Aqua mumbled softly behind me. How unnecessary.

“I knew from the start that you are a minion of the demon king army. Do you still remember me? Several days ago, we met in the bath of a certain hotel right?”

“...!? Ahh! You are that man with the lecherous gaze!”

Wha, what do you mean by lecherous?! How rude.

“I heard you say back then about destroying the Axis cult or something! I also knew you were wary of me in the hot spring back then. I only stared at that big breasted onee-san to make you lower your guard!”

“Hey, you didn't say anything because you don't want to be dragged into a troublesome incident. And you are shamelessly boasting about it.”

Darkness retorted behind me...

Why were the people behind so noisy?

Hans started backing away after hearing what I said.

He was wary of Wiz alone earlier, but now, the one he was most wary of was me.

“To not back down while facing me. I see, so you are quite capable.”

Hans said as he glared at me.

What do you mean by backing down, why do I need to do that before a slime? Don't flatter yourself.

He might look like a strong and well built man, but he was actually just a slime.

The mob monsters that appears in all sorts of games.

From the name deadly poison slime, his main weapon should be poison. But we have Aqua who could cleanse away the poison, so that was nothing to worry about.

In summary, I don't think I will lose.

"Just surrender! Wiz, you and him were ex-colleagues right? I don't think you would want to fight him, so back down for now, I will go."

"Ka,Kazuma-san!? I might be overthinking it but... Will you be fine!? Erm, Hans-san is...!"

Wiz who was backing away shouted anxiously.

I drew my sword, the polished blade gleamed under the sunlight.

To think the first thing I will cut down with my new sword would be a slime.

Aqua and the others were already prepared to fight, taking up stances with their weapons.

Darkness who was beside me drew her long sword and stared at the enemy cautiously.

"...Seems like you all really want to fight. Good! It has been a long time since any adventurers dare challenge me! No matter who it was, they will cower before me and beg for mercy after learning my true nature. You have guts to fight me head on!"

Hans said something a final boss would say and raise his hands.

"I am Hans! A boss of the demon king army, a variant type deadly poison slime!"

"... What did you just say?"

What did this slime just said?

I think I heard the term 'boss of the demon king army'.

"Kazuma-san! Even among the bosses of the demon king army, Hans is a monster with higher than average bounty! He is very strong, so be careful...!"

Even if you told me that now...

I held up my sword and shifted backwards.

"Nah, Darkness, slimes are mob monsters right? They are just small fries right?"

When Darkness who was taking a stance heard my question—

"Slimes are mob monsters? Where did you hear that nonsense from? Leaving small slimes aside, slimes above a certain size are powerful adversaries. Firstly, physical attacks are useless. Their magic defence is high too. They eat anything, so it's over if they stick on to you. They could seep in through the gaps in your armor, touch your skin and dissolve you with digestive fluids, they could also block your mouth and suffocate you to death."

What is this, so scary... but... hmmm?

Could it be, I did something really dumb?

"Don't touch the deadly poison slime, Kazuma! It has poison potent enough to contaminate the poison in the entire city! It could harm so many people after it was diluted, you will die instantly if you touch it!"

"... In, instant death?"

After hearing Megumin's warning, my heart started beating wildly.

"No problem Kazuma! With me around, it is fine even if you die! But don't get swallowed whole! If you do, your entire body will dissolve, and it won't matter how powerful my resurrection spell is!"

When I heard what Aqua said—

"Now, come at me bro, brave adventurers! I will make you re... gret...?"

I turned my back on Hans and ran as fast as I could.

Part 5

I bashed through the vegetation and slid down the slope of the hill.

The branches scratched my face.

"Wahhh, Kazuma! Wait! Wait!"

"Hurry up idiot! Or I will leave you behind!"

Oh shit oh shit!

This fellow was the most powerful one I had faced!

I would die from just a touch, would be dissolved if I got caught, and resurrection won't even work!

"Darkness, run quick! This is bad, we will die! Don't think too much, just run!"

"Ahhh... the slime... the slime will...!"

Megumin tugged the hand of Darkness who was reluctant to leave the slime and followed behind me closely.

Darkness who had an abnormal interest in the gooey body of slimes wanted to fight Hans alone, but we didn't let her do that.

She might be able to tank the attack of the slime, but she lacks means of attacking.

"Ka, Kazuma-san, you keep panting while climbing the hill, but you are fast when running away...!"

Wiz who was at the tail of the group ran hard to chase us.

And behind Wiz—

"Are you mocking me, human! After saying all that before me, you still ran away in the end, you are not living your life correctly! You are an adventurer after all, don't you feel shame?!"

Hans whose face was red from anger chased us at full speed.

"Of course I am an adventurer! The weakest job of all, adventurer, how can I fight a boss of the demon king army head on!?"

"What weakest job! You even...! ... What?"

Hans suddenly stopped.

Following his lead, we stopped too.

You, are an adventurer? The weakest job adventurer? Not the general term adventurer, but the job name similar to arch wizard and priest... Adventurer?"

"Yes, that's right, what is the problem?"

Hans' eyes turned red immediately. He then closed his eyes gently and sighed.

He was a slime, but his actions were just like a human.

"I will let you off this time, scram, small fry!"

After Hans spat out these words, he turn and head back towards the hot spring source.

"... Phew, it is finally over."

"It is not over! Hey, he is going back to destroy the hot spring source!"

Aqua refused to let me go, but frankly speaking, this fellow was too hard to handle.

"Then tell me how we can beat that guy. Wiz will feel bad if we ask her to go. I don't know if Darkness can handle his poison. We can only ask Megumin to do a sneak explosion attack from range."

"Erm... if you cast explosion on Hans-san, his body will scatter and pollute this whole place. Slime has high resistance against magic, if you don't get them all, it will be hard to destroy him..."

Doesn't that mean we couldn't do anything?

"I am not exaggerating, we really can't do anything this time. If physical attacks work, I was planning to try out my new sword."

"We will postpone the debut of Chunchunmaru to the next volume. But if we leave him be, the hot springs will be in danger. Then a demon king army boss will get his way."

"Don't call my sword by that weird name, I will never call it by that name... Sigh, what a pain. Nah, Aqua, shall we give up on this hot spring? We can develop other means of business in the future. Honestly, there is no meaning in the existence of the Axis cult right?"

As expected she pounced on and strangled me when I told her the truth.

As I was wrestling with Aqua, Hans' figure got smaller and smaller.

"I got it... Nah! I will go and purify that slime!"

Aqua proposed a bold plan.

Part 6

I chased Hans back to the hot spring source he wanted to poison and found him soaking his right arm in the water.

From afar, we could see the hot spring gradually growing murky, seemed like a large amount of poison had been pumped in.

And of course, the pipes transporting was definitely full of poison too.

“That guy, didn’t he thought about destroying the pipes directly?!”

Contaminating all the water source was like looking for trouble.

But speaking of which, the pipes could be repaired if it is destroyed. However, if the sources were contaminated, there would be no way to salvage it.

He must be planning to destroy this city completely.

And there were few priests that could cleanse such potent poison.

“The pipes seemed to be made of magic metal, and is not easy to break. It is the financial lifeline of this city after all, so they did not sting on the cost.”

That was true. I agreed with Megumin. At the same time, Aqua who was purifying the polluted hot spring was getting anxious.

“Nah! Can you be more serious about this! It will be bad if this goes on! If the last remaining water source gets polluted, it will be a long time before the hot springs will be available in this city again!? The Axis cult in this city will disband!”

“Isn’t that a good thing?” x3

“Waahhhhh!”

The voice of the three of us rang out in harmony. Aqua threw herself into Wiz’s arms and cried.

“Wait, e..everyone! Stop joking with Aqua-sama! The important right now is...”

I wasn’t joking.

It would be great if that annoying cult was destroyed.

“What, you all are here again? No matter, there is only one source left, the deed will be done if I contaminate it. Finally, I can finally destroy this damn city!”

This boss of the demon king army must have suffered greatly because of the Axis cultists while he was undercover in this city.

“Hey, how long have you been staying in this city?... Ah, by the way, you changed your form into that of the hot spring manager to get in right? Where is the real manager!? He should be a blonde grandpa, he...”

“I ate him.”

Hans replied casually.

... Ate him?

“What, what did you say?”

“I said, I ate him. I am a slime, isn’t eating a natural instinct? Anyway, my shape shifting ability only works if I devour—”

— the target.

When Hans was about to say that—

“Cursed Crystal Prison.”

A cold calm voice echoed in the snowy hills.

“!? Ahhhh!?”

With a cracking sound, Hans’ right arm and the contaminated source froze in an instant.

Hans whose right hand was frozen with the hot spring let out a cry.

I looked towards the owner of the voice.

The one emitting an aura that befits the strongest undead, lich— was Wiz. The gentle Wiz I am familiar with was nowhere to be found.

Wiz looked at the screaming Hans whose hand was frozen with an expressionless face.

“My condition for staying neutral— Not interfering with the demon king’s army, is ‘the guarantee that aside from adventurers and knights, the demon king army will not harm civilians who are non-combatants’, right?”

“Wiz, stop! Undo your spell! Wiz!”

Wiz did not respond to Hans’ cries.

“It is inevitable for adventurers to lose their lives in battle. They take the lives of monsters every day, that is their livelihood. They must have made the resolve of being killed by monsters. It is the same for knights, their salary are paid by the people, and in exchange, they have to protect the citizens. In exchange, it couldn’t be helped if they had to sacrifice their very lives...”

“Wiz! You really want to fight me!? If we go at it for real, this area will be contaminated...!”

Before Hans could finish.

“But, the hot spring manager grandpa is innocent.”

Wiz said with a pained expression.

Someone was pulling the corner of my shirt. I looked back and saw Aqua and Megumin sticking close to my back.

... So this is the serious Wiz, she was totally different.

Even I felt a bit afraid.

Darkness lowered her stance beside me, ready to cover Wiz at any moment.

Damn it, even the usually gentle Wiz was so serious about this.

I should also—!

“Wiz! Sorry, but I don’t plan to fight you! Let me finish my chores and leave!”

Hans said as he broke his frozen right arm before our eyes.

The frozen arm shattered. Immediately, a translucent arm grew from his stump.

Hans gave up his right arm and charged towards the last water source!

Part 7

We gave pursuit to Hans relentlessly.

By the way, we had been running here and there since just now! What was with my hot spring vacation, I wasn’t here to train, I came here to recuperate!

“Kazuma! That slime is fast! Shouldn’t slime be those soft, cute gooey monsters that moves slowly?!”

Seemed like Aqua had the same impression of slimes as me.

Or rather, it was strange for slimes to be sentient.

If that was so, where was that guy’s brain?!

“Hans-san, I won’t let you destroy the hot spring! Cursed Crystal Prison!”

“!! Shit, I don’t match up well with you!”

Wiz froze Hans’ lower body with her spell. Right now, he was about ten meters away from the last water source.

Slime that had high resistance to magic, and a mutant boss level slime at that was being subdued easily by Wiz. As expected of a lich.

However...!

“I still have this ace in the hole! You are as naive as you were in the past, Wiz!”

Hans tore off his right arm and threw it at the hot spring.

“Ahh!?” x4

Everyone except Hans and me watched helplessly as that arm flew in a beautiful arc towards the water source.

As for me...

“Snipe!”

I pulled my bow, and used snipe to hit the arm in the air away.

“Wha!?”

Hans stared eyes wide open in surprise, looking back and forth between me and the water source.

Gritting his teeth, he tore pieces of his lower body and threw them at the water source.

The accuracy of snipe was dependent on the user’s agility and luck.

But no matter how high my luck stat was, I couldn’t handle this many target!

“Aqua, use that magic that improves luck, the one you used during rock scissors paper!”

“Eh!? O, okay!”

When we were deciding who should sit in the cargo compartment during the carriage ride, Aqua used a spell named ‘blessing’.

Let’s use that to raise my luck stats!

“Blessing!”

“Snipe!”

The moment I received the buff spell from Aqua, the arrows’ accuracy and range were enhanced, hitting the targets without fail.

Seeing this scene, everyone aside from me and Hans sighed in relief.

“What, what is this! Are you kidding me! What terrifying accuracy is this!?”

Hans roared in anger.

Megumin answered.

“Don’t look down on this man’s luck! His stats might be weaker than a mage, but he survived his fight with powerful foes thanks to his strong luck!”

“Hey, are you praising or mocking me?!”

I squabbled with Megumin while looking at the frozen Hans. I didn’t felt nervous anymore.

Instead of not being nervous, it was more like carelessness.

Hans struggled painfully as he threw another body part out...

“Kazuma, shoot it down, shoot it down now!”

Aqua placed both hands on her hips with an easy smile on her face.

“Leave it to...! ...Ah.”

“Huh? What is it Kazuma?”

Aqua asked confusedly.

With a splash— one of Hans' body parts fell into the hot spring.

“Eh?” x5

Including Hans, everyone except me made a surprised noise.

“... I ran out of arrows.”

“— Wah, wahhhh!”

Aqua rushed to the source and wanted to stick her hand in.

“Aqua-sama, don't do it! A part of Hans-san's body fell into the hot spring! This is on a different level from the contamination earlier!”

Aqua ignored Wiz and stuck her hand in without any hesitation.

“Ahhh it hurts, hot! Heal! Heal! Wiz, help me, the pipe of the last water source is going to be contaminated!”

Aqua endured the scalding water and healed her hand with magic as she asked Wiz for help.

“A, Aqua-sama! ... Light of Saber!!”

Seeing this scene, Wiz chop with her hand, using light magic to cut a part of the contaminated pipe.

She only sliced the part containing the polluted water off.

In that case, it could be repaired in just a few days.

As I was feeling relieved.

I heard cracking sound coming from Hans, the sound of something breaking.

“Kazuma, Ka, Kazuma...!”

Megumin made frightened sound and looked over there.

Hans— No, the shapeshifting slime that was Hans—

“This...! What a cute slime! Such a pity! If it wasn't poisonous, I would bring it home as a pet!”

Darkness whose brain probably melted said some nonsense.

That slime expanded to the size of our mansion.

“That's too big—!”

Part 8

Unable to maintain its human form, the slime ballooned into a ball and crushed the trees around it, absorbing them into its body.

“Oh no, Hans is getting serious! Wiz, take care of that guy! Use that freezing spell from earlier! End this battle with that spell!”

We started scrambling out of the way while screaming. We kept dodging to avoid being absorbed by Hans.

“That spell is not big enough to cover Hans-san who is now so large! If I don’t drain some mana from someone...!!”

Wiz pleaded with me for help. Right now, the only one who could supply Wiz with mana was...!

“Megumin! Now is your time to be the sacrifice! My mana isn’t enough, and draining Aqua’s mana will give Wiz unhealthy side effects!”

“Me!? No no, don’t wanna! I would rather blow that guy up with explosion!”

“Don’t do that! You will pollute the entire hill!”

Aqua stopped Megumin sternly. Darkness started taking off her armor noisily.

Hey, you—!

“What are you doing? Why are you taking your armor off...”

“If the opponent is a slime, armor is useless. It will give them an opening instead, so I am better off without it.”

Darkness took off the armour she treasured so much and returned to her casual wear. Her brain had definitely been turned to mush.

“And I like this armor. You repaired it for me, so it will hurt me to see it melted or destroyed.”

After saying that, Darkness also threw her sword aside.

Physical attacks were useless against slimes.

Since it was useless, there was no need to hold on to this heavy weapon.

“Hey why are you stripping! Run!”

I grabbed Darkness’ hand and pulled her in the direction of the source.

And over there is—

“Wahhhh! Kazuma! Kazuma-sama help ahhh!”

In the face of the approaching Hans, Aqua continued sticking her hand in the water source while wailing, refusing to flee.

“What are you doing moron! Don’t bother with that now and run!”

“But, but! If I don’t defend this place, my believers will...!”

Darkness stood in front of Aqua as Aqua insisted on cleansing the hot spring despite the pain.

The steely faced Wiz seemed to have resolved herself and came to Aqua’s side.

“Kazuma, what should we do!? You always have dirty tricks up your sleeves! Hurry up and deal with this!”

“Why, you...! What do you mean by dirty tricks! Damn it, I will come up with something! So you just do your thing!”

“Do, do my thing?”

Megumin hugged her staff and asked a little frantically.

“The only thing you can do! Deal the final blow to the boss! Prepare your spell and standby in the vicinity of that guy!”

After giving my instruction, I left Megumin who was lifting her staff up and headed towards Hans.

The squirming gigantic block of black pudding wasn't satisfied with the vegetation, and even swallowed the rocks and sand too.

After releasing its human form, it was probably being driven by its instinct.

Hans did not attack us, it just devoured the things around it and head slowly towards the source.

The weapon in my hand and the skills that I had couldn't harm it at all.

You could say that I am helpless before it.

Even if I use freeze on it, it won't have any effect.

And Hans was too near to Aqua and the other's position, too close to use explosion.

Actually, we could just flee if Aqua gave up on the hot spring. However, the usually cowardly Aqua chose this time to display her guts.

I used up all my arrows, so I couldn't even attract Hans' attention...

... No, wait.

If it was the current Hans that moves according to its instinct.

If I use that thing before it...

“Aqua-sama, even if I exhaust all my mana, I would not be able to freeze Hans-san who had become so huge! Let's withdraw! Everyone in the Axis cult wouldn't want Aqua-sama to be hurt too!”

“No! If I don't step up, who will protect my cultists! If I can't even protect the homes of my devotees, then what would be the point of my existence!? Also, cast some freeze for me!”

Aqua refused to listen to Wiz's pleas, and even ask her to cast freeze.

There was Megumin who had prepared her spell and ready to cast it, and Wiz who was shaking her hand and bracing herself.

Darkness placed her treasured armor and sword by her feet along with...the gifts she bought at the local specialties shop together with me.

“Darkness, bring those thing beside your feet to me!”

“? That thing?— the specialties gifts?”

She obediently brought the gifts and ran to my side.

I flip through my backpack and took the share I bought out too.

The Arcane buns and meat buns I brought from the round ear elf and the clean shaven dwarf.

I threw those at Hans.

“Ah! What are you doing, such a waste! You will receive retribution for wasting food, Ka... Zuma...”

Darkness wanted to criticise my actions, but was dumbfounded after seeing Hans’ action.

Hans happily ate the snacks I threw.

Seemed like slime was similar to humans, compared to vegetation and rocks, they prefer things that had proteins and high calories.

I grabbed all the gifts Darkness brought with her...!

“No, you can’t Kazuma! I plan to give this to my dear father and the servants...!”

I ignored Darkness who sensed my intentions, and threw them in the direction away from the hot spring.

“You can buy gifts anytime! I will shop together with you! Don’t be depressed and run!”

I tugged Darkness who showed a sad face momentarily and linked up with Aqua and the others.

Hans seemed interested in the gifts and squirmed in that direction.

“Wiz, after blowing Hans into pieces, can you freeze it?”

“If Hans-san is about half his current size, I should just barely manage with my remaining mana...”

Just barely... Good!

“Aqua, Wiz will freeze Hans when he blows into pieces, can you purify the hot spring alone?”

“I, I can! This is an emergency, I will show you my true ability!”

Seemed workable.

“I just need to protect everyone from getting hurt by Hans when it explodes right?”

“Yes, I’m counting on you.”

At a time like this, we could only depend on the Darkness’ strong body.

Aqua owned a holy relic that protects her from abnormal status like poison. She and the muscle head Darkness should be able to defend against the poison of the demon king’s army boss.

... Probably.

I remember this girl learned a lot of skills raising her resistance against abnormal status.

The advantage of her concentrating on defence could only be seen in a crisis like this. I had no choice but to trust her.

Hans was still enjoying Darkness' gifts before our eyes.

Immune to physical attack, high resistance against magic.

You will die from its poison with a touch, and defeating it will pollute the environment.

Why did I meet such a troublesome adversary?

What was wrong with my hot spring vacation?

I still felt my luck couldn't be that good.

"Kazuma, how long do I have to wait! I am ready to deal an elegant blow!"

Megumin who had taken off her eyepatch yelled excitedly, her red eyes shining.

After finishing the gifts, Hans finally came at us.

Maybe it was searching for new prey, or he was driven by the remnants of his self.

I lift my hand towards Wiz.

"When I say go, Wiz will drain my mana away— just don't let me die."

"Eh!?"

I heard Wiz yelped.

"... Well then, do it Megumin— Go!"

"Leave it to me! Eat my huge explosive magic! Explosion—!!"

I witness Megumin blowing Hans to pieces with explosion, and its pieces flying all over.

As Darkness protected us, I could feel my mana disappearing, and my consciousness fade.

I will leave the rest to my comrades who were only dependable during such a crisis—

Part 9

Several days later.

As the heroes who saved the city—

"Wooo... I, I worked so hard...! I, I really gave it my all... but...!!"

Together with the wailing Aqua, we made our way back to Axel.

"How should I put this... I actually felt sorry for Aqua for once..."

Megumin consoled Aqua on the rocky carriage.

Aqua kept looking out the window and snivelled from time to time.

— We destroyed Hans. Darkness did her role as a tank, protecting us from getting hurt by the debris from Hans. After that, Wiz who had drained mana from me froze all the remnants.

“... I wonder if dear father and the servants will like this...”

Darkness held the newly bought local specialty gifts and mumbled to herself expectantly.

This girl had a rather serious dad complex.

I shift my eyes away from the cheery Darkness and said to Aqua.

“... Don't you know there is such a thing call moderation?”

“It can't be helped, because I thought the water source would be contaminated if I don't give it my all...! Wahhh, I worked so hard, this is too mean ahhh!”

I ignored the wailing Aqua and looked at Wiz who was devoid of life.

Her already pale face was becoming transparent, as if she would disappear at any moment... Hey, that's bad—!

“Hey, she is going to disappear again! She is disappearing!”

“Darkness, share your energy with her! Transfer some of them to Wiz quick!”

“I, I get it! Come Kazuma, take it!”

I frantically grabbed Wiz in the carriage.

I used drain touch on Darkness who was the most energetic of us all and transferred her energy to Wiz.

When we saw Wiz who was on the verge of disappearing recover, we breathe a sigh of relief.

At this moment.

Aqua who was facing the window the whole time—

“I only tried to cleanse the hot springs with all my powers! Why are they so angry!”

She started wailing because of that once again.

— After we reported to the adventurers guild that we defeated the demon king's army boss Hans, we received a lot of gratitude as the ones who resolved the contamination incident.

... Until they realized the fact that 'hot spring water won't flow anymore.

After I was drained of my mana and lost consciousness, Aqua used all her might to purify the hot springs.

In the end, she turned all the water in the source into warm water.

As a side effect, the pitiful lich was almost purified because of this powerful cleansing magic.

In summary, the goal of the demon king army to cut off the financial lifeline of the Axis cult had been accomplished by Aqua.

The main tourist attraction of this city was now gone.

Normally, we would be forced to pay a heavy compensation.

However, since Aqua did so in order to save the cult— as well as the city—, everyone forgave her. And so, the entire bounty from taking down Hans was forfeited.

We were supposed to teleport back to Axel via Wiz's spell, but her condition wasn't good, so we opt to take a carriage back instead.

“Listen to me! Both of you listen to me! Please, just hear me out!”

“What is it, the carriage is already shaking, can you not shake me even more?!”

“Go on, I don't mind listening.”

Aqua who was looking at Megumin and Darkness said:

“The reason this incident turned out this way... is because my powers are too strong. Even the clumsy Darkness and screwy head Megumin... That hurts! Lis, listen me to the end! The two of them must realize my true identity now right?”

Aqua who was subdued by Darkness and Megumin didn't give in.

“It is about time for you to believe that I am a real goddess right!?”

After hearing what Aqua said, the two of them turn silent.

“... Kazuma, let's go to a more effective hot springs next time.”

“That's right, a hot springs that can heal mental problems.”

“Why don't you believe me!?”

The carriage was noisy.

Especially Aqua's wailing.



Epilogue 1— The office of the Bishop

“— That concludes the report. The crisis has been resolved.”

After reading the report handed to me, I took a deep breath to calm my wildly beating heart.

The priest who handed the report to me must be the same like me, acting cool on the outside, but the feeling of happiness on the verge of bursting out.

Since just now, he had been closing his eyes and uttering words of thanks.

“Purifying the hot springs of an entire city by herself. On top of that, the toxin from the demon king’s army boss Hans and pieces of his body was all cleanse away—”

As he read the report, his voice trembled.

“In order to cleanse the remnants of the demon king’s army boss, a large group of excellent arch priests will require several months to accomplish that. But—”

“That’s right, and... The appearance of that great person...”

The priest who came to reporting said emotionally. His voice was trembling.

“Blue hair, blue eyes, wearing a hagoromo with a dignified and beautiful appearance.”

It is true.

The joy was making him feel faint.

“What should we do next? Should we announce this to the cultist in the city...”

“Of course we will. However, we will need to inform them in private. That great person might visit this city to play again. When the time comes, we need to tell them not to behave too respectfully, and not talk to her too casually... Also, what about the water source that had been purified?”

“Yes, hot spring water doesn’t gush out anymore, but...”

“If I’m not wrong, it is water that could heal wounds and very effective against undead monsters?”

“Yes, the holy water is very strong too... Simply put, instead of operating a hot spring, the profits from selling these holy water would be higher.”

That was obvious.

After all, it was purified by the full power of that great person, it was only natural.

“... Speaking of which, we seemed to have burdened that great person with heavy debts...”

“... What should we do, my opinion is that we have to pretend we didn’t realize her true identity in order for that great person to come visit again with peace of mind...”

I replied.

“How about this. We will send an envoy to Axel, and return the compensation money back in some sort of way...”

“... Good point, let's do that then. By right, we should thank her for saving the city and apologize for burdening her with debts...”

Let's wait for that great person to visit this city again and—

The priest lowered his head.

“Well then, I will do as you asked, Zesta-sama—”

“Yes, please do.”

After I finished, the priest bowed to me and left the room.

I read the report again and muttered gratefully.

“I offer you my most sincere thanks on behalf of the cult, Aqua-sama—!”

Epilogue 2 — After the journey—

“Home—!”

“Can’t you say ‘I am home’ properly?”

Aqua opened the door to the mansion in high spirits, and entered the home we were away from these few days.

What did I do during this vacation?

As usual, I got dragged into some troublesome matters, and lost the mood when I realized it.

Never mind, I visited the hot springs and went into the mixed bath...

... Mixed bath.

Hmm? Was that really a mixed bath?

Didn’t I only bath with that onee-san called Wolback?

And that Onee-san wrapped her body with a towel securely.

In the mansion, I did bath with Megumin and Darkness before.

... Hmmm, what is with that.

Now that I think of it, wouldn’t it be better if I didn’t go for the vacation?

Ara...

“What’s the matter? Why the weird face? Is this some kind of new game?”

“I am just imitating you. Looks just like you, right?”

While I was struggling against Aqua who pounced on me, Darkness said.

“Really, we just came back, can’t you two give it a rest? Have some tea and cool down, both of you.”

She took off her armour as she said that and went into the pantry.

“Phew, this place makes me feel the most at ease-- Although it isn’t adequate for the one who propose the trip to say that.”

Megumin said as she jumped onto the couch in the living room.

“Hey Megumin, that is my special holy seat!”

“If you want it, let’s decide it with a game.”

Megumin took out that board game she was great at and started playing against Aqua.

I sat on the other end of the couch and watched them play. Darkness came over at this time with the tea she brewed.

This girl was always so clumsy, I didn't think she could brew tea.

"Nah, Megumin, you are using your arch wizard too cunningly. Here, take my useless crusader, let's trade."

"Tactically speaking, I don't need the crusader. I reject the trade. It's your turn, Aqua."

"Hey, erm, well, I know you two are talking about the game, but..."

I sipped on my tea as I listened to their mindless chatter.

Maybe it was because we just reached home after our trip, the relaxing atmosphere was really comfortable.

However, something will definitely happen at a time like this.

I could tell from experience.

"Megumin! Nah, is Megumin here!? And, is Kazuma-san here too!?"

Along with an anxious voice, someone was rapping the door of the mansion.

See, here it comes.

"Here here! Is that Yunyun? What is the matter, something troublesome? Be it a demon king army boss or a bounty target, just tell me what is bothering you."

I ranted nonstop as I opened the door. Yunyun was blinking her eyes right outside.

Her face was red.

She was out of breath, what happened?

"Erm, erm... This is very sudden... but..."

Yunyun seemed to be steeling herself as she bit her lips.

I drank my tea as I encouraged her to go on with an easy expression.

I was fearless now, already used to such developments.

"What is the matter Yunyun? Looking for me?"

Megumin stood up. Yunyun shook her head and looked straight into my face.

Looking for me? I don't care what kind of trouble it was— Bring it on!

Yunyun shouted at me who was drinking tea leisurely.

"I...! I...!! I want to have Kazuma-san's children!!"

I spat out the tea in my mouth.

HMM...?
WHAT...?

どうして急に...
BUT WHY SO SUDDEN...

I DON'T
MIND
WATCHING
OVER THE
SHOP...

THOU WISH
TO VIST THE
CITY OF HOT
SPRINGS,
ALCANRETIA?

DEVIOLUS
SMILE

金ごと
SEEMS LIKE...
THESE FELLOWS
HAVE SOME
HIDDEN INTEN-
TIONS

鈍ら
四重奏
カルテット

ちよ
せで
よら
か
LET ME
TAKE A
QUICK
PEEK

この
素晴らしい
世界に4
祝福を!



THIS LADY OVER THERE! I SEE YOU HAVE THE SHADOW OF MISFORTUNE OVER YOU... DO YOU WANT TO KEEP A DOLL OF GODDESS ERIS WITH YOU? IT WILL GUARANTEE GOOD LUCK!

THE CASE FOR WIZ

ARA, THIS WILL IMPROVE THE BUSINESS IN THE SHOP..!

VANIR-SAN SEEMS TO LIKE DOLLS, I WILL GIFT THIS TO HIM...

I DID MAKE DOLLS THE OTHER TIME, BUT I DIDN'T DO SO BECAUSE I LIKE THEM.

I WILL RECEIVE DIVINE RETRIBUTION IF I BLOW THAT DOLL UP.

THAT CHURCH...

IN ITS LEVEL 100
BASEMENT, THERE
WILL DEFINITELY
BE A POWERFUL
ENEMY THERE...

THE
CASE
FOR
MEGU
MIN

ARCH WIZ-
ARD-SAMA
FROM THE
CRIMSON
MAGIC RACE!

THIS CITY IS
SUFFERING
BECAUSE OF
THE ATTACKS
FROM
FEROCIOUS
MONSTERS!

LEAVE
EVERYTHING
TO ME.

FLU...
VERY
WELL
THEN.

WITH MY MAGIC
POWERS!
ALL THE ENE-
MIES!
WILL BURN INTO
CRISP!
LOOK FOR-
WARD TO IT,
FUHAHAHAHA!

IS THERE
NOTHING BUT
EXPLOSION IN
HER MIND?

✕
I REFUSE!

7 4 ...
NOW, CONFESS YOUR SINS PROPERLY.

THE CASE FOR DARKNESS

I AM A BELIEVER OF THE GODDESS ERIS, I WILL NOT GIVE IN NO MATTER WHAT YOU AXIS CULTIST SAY TO ME!

WELL THEN...

NO COMMENT.

ア
WHAT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING!? STOP...!

THEN I WILL ASK YOUR BODY DIRECTLY.

OH, HOW SAINTLY...!

AHH!
AQUA-
SAMA!

THE
CASE
FOR
AQUA

AQUA-SAMA!
PLEASE SHAKE
MY HAND!

AQUA-SAMA!
PLEASE GIVE
ME YOUR
AUTOGRAPH!

CAN I TAKE
A PHOTO?!

ALRIGHT
ALRIGHT, I
WON'T GO
ANYWHERE
ELSE
OKAY?

HOW
KIND
AND
GENTLE...

BE GOOD
KIDS AND
DON'T
FIGHT
ALRIGHT?

おおー

PEEP-
ING
ON
THE
GIRLS

THE
CASE
FOR
KAZU
MA

КУ!
КУ!
КУ...

ダメですうう
うう

[illegible]

AS
XPECTED
OF HIM.

THAT GIRL...



あの娘は...

HMM...?



い



I SEE, I GET IT NOW, BUT SINCE IT IS A DELUSION, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN THEM INSTEAD OF JUST PEEPING...

あるか



FUFU, YOU ARE RIGHT, MEGUMIN.

THE HOT SPRING IS SO COMFY, YUNYUN.

THE CASE FOR YUN YUN



Good Luck

我輩は見通す悪魔

MOI ART THE DEVIL OF FORESIGHT. SO MOI KNOWS THAT THE DELUSION OF EVERYONE HERE WON'T COME TRUE

ANYWAY, THOU SHOULD JUST GET GOING!



I WANT TO HAVE A CHILD WITH KAZUMA-SAN!



NO PROBLEM!



WHAT... ARE YOU SERIOUS, YUNYUN!?



WHAT IS THIS CHILD SAYING SO ABRUPTLY?

...IS THIS SOME KIND OF PREGNANCY PLAY?



THE LOT OF YOU... I UNDERSTAND, ALL OF YOU ARE JEALOUS OF HER RIGHT?



.....。



AN, ANYWAY, PLEASE FOLLOW ME TO THE HOME OF THE CRIMSON MAGIC!

この素晴らしい世界に
祝福を! 5

EXPLOSIVE CRIMSON MAGIC LET'S GO!



COMING SOON!!